

THE STATE OF THE STAGE.

BY DAVID WILLIAMSON.

The

# Leisure Hour

CHRISTMAS IN MANY LANDS



December  
1902

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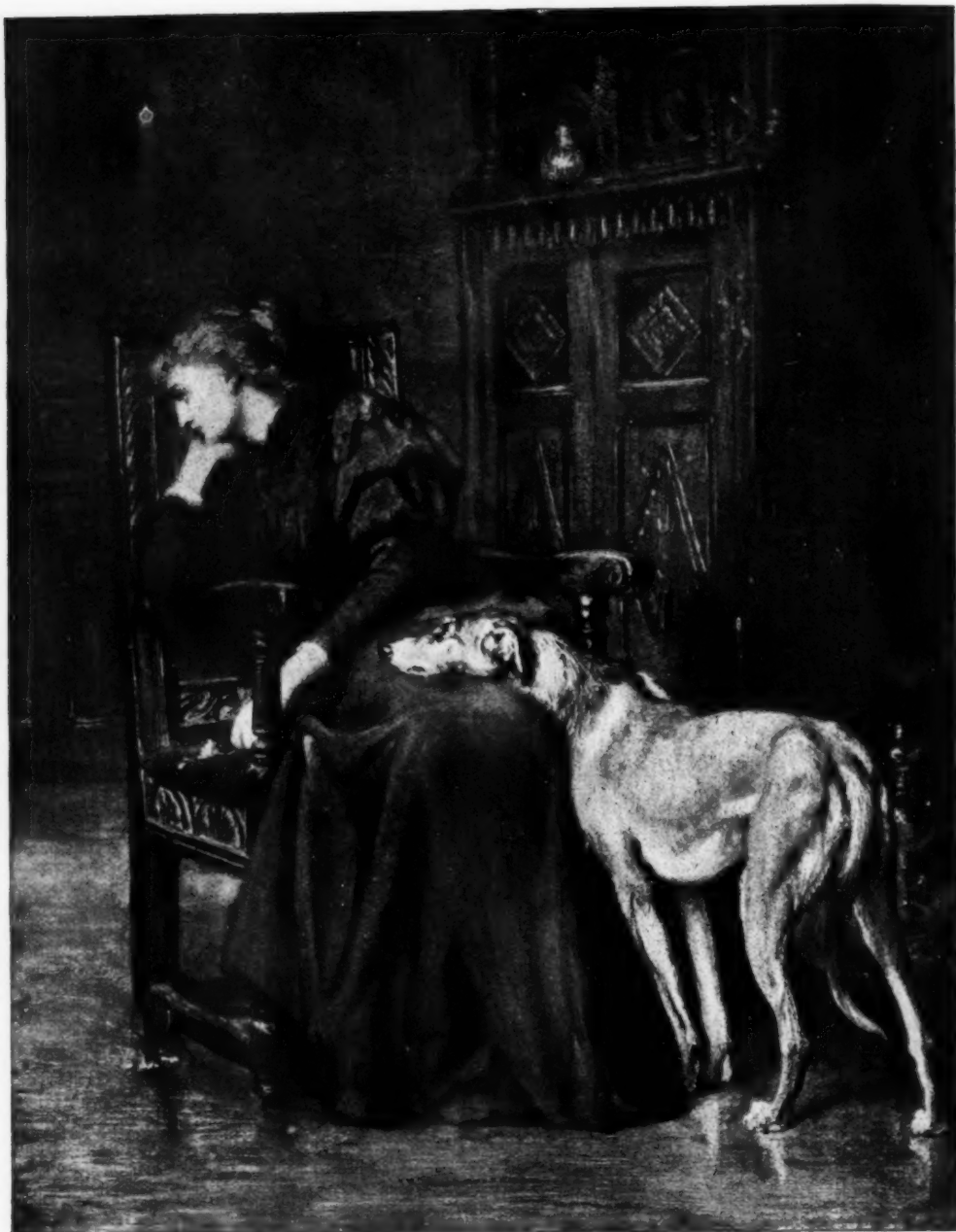
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# REGRETS



# The Intriguers

BY JOHN BLOUNDELLE-BURTON

## SUMMARY OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

THE story opens in an old inn in Paris in August 1714. There Rosamund Welby and her companion, Fräulein Groesbeck, are awaiting the arrival of Rupert Frayne, Rosamund's lover, whom she wants to detach from the Jacobite cause.

In another room in the same hotel Gachette, Starbuck and Leicester North are hatching a Jacobite plot to intercept the new King of England, George I., on his way from Herrenhausen through Holland to London. They see a woman disappearing, and conclude that Rosamund Welby has been listening at the door.

Starbuck is the man chosen to go to Venlo and give the other conspirators warning of the route of the new King.

### CHAPTER IV.—"THE DOG IS DEAD"

AFTER this episode, Starbuck had proceeded towards Venlo, and now as the night drew on, he was preparing to depart for Horst, where he expected to meet those who were appointed to prevent, if possible, the new King of England from ever reaching his new country. He knew also, or he thought he knew, that it was quite probable that the desperadoes who lined the roads and villages which lay between Herrenhausen and the Dutch coast were as well aware as he was that their quarry had set out upon his journey accompanied by his son. He imagined, too, that it was more than likely that the deed which had been planned had been accomplished by now, and that the new King of England and his son were dead—their bodies run through and through or riddled with bullets, or their coaches and themselves blown up by petards.

Yet, at the same time, he did not ignore the fact that, even if this had happened, the snake was only scotched and not killed, since, left behind in Hanover were children of George Augustus who would at once step into the shoes of their murdered grandfather and father. But all these things troubled him not one jot! He was himself no Jacobite at heart, but only a mercenary whose services were at the disposal of those who would pay best for them, and whether George Lewis or George Augustus left no descendants behind, or left a dozen, was a matter of no importance to him—no more than was the fact that these two men might be dead now, or, escaping all ambushes, might still live to secure the English throne.

His duty was, first, to carry the news from Paris to Holland that the anticipated victims were on the road, and, secondly, if they were not already slain, to lend a hand in contriving, if not executing, the slaughter that was desired. For doing this he was to be paid five hundred guineas, and that was all that concerned him! Let honest, fervent Jacobites bewail the murder, if it took place, as a thing which, among other disasters, would bring everlasting shame upon the Stuart cause, or let vagabonds like Gachette, and several others in England of whom Starbuck knew, rejoice exceedingly if their schemes succeeded—it all mattered not a stiver to him. He was, himself, a free lance who could not afford politics nor the espousal of any party; payment for his services was all that he required.

So he set out upon his road, and night had fallen ere he left Venlo upon a fresh horse which he had hired—a night dark and moonless at present, and with, in the heavens above, only myriads of stars to light him on his way.

"Which," he said to himself as he rode out of the north gate, "is very well. I fags, the night is the time for brisk boys to be about their work;" whereon he opened his holster and, bringing forth a flask, primed himself with a dram. For the man was in good spirits on this evening, he was taking part in a deed which was congenial to him, while, by to-morrow morning, he would have earned his reward. All of which things—added to the fact that Gachette had handed over to him an ample supply of louis d'or ere he set out from Paris—tended to make him feel bright and gay, to cause him to sing now and again, and to produce a pipe from his haversack, and, stuffing it

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full of prime Virginia, to inhale the fumes with gusto, and also to have recourse to the above flask more than once.

And so he rode along, varying his song with a pull at his pipe, and his pipe with a pull at his flask, but still with a wary eye open for anything that might either approach, or be ahead of, or come behind him. For Starbuck had been engaged in many as dangerous enterprises as this before now, and knew very well how to take care of himself.

"Ay! a many have I taken part in," he muttered as he thought of them, "yet never have I embarked on one with my spirits more light. Ho! my worthy Gachette, when I have pouched your guineas, what days and nights will I have in Paris—ay! and in London, too. For who will know that Starbuck was in the business? Who! Who!" and he fell to singing—

"When I eye your carlèd lace,  
Gentle soul—you think your face  
Straight some murder does begin——"

Yet he stopped in the middle of his song. "Tush," he said, "this is folly! Let me consider." Which it was, perhaps, as well he should do, since now he knew that he was nearing Horst, where the great Holland road broke off to east and west. Then, as he rode along through a forest, or rather a large and dense copse of larches and silver ash, amidst which lay many trees blown down and some that had been felled by the woodmen's axes, he reflected upon how he was to recognise those who would be outside the village waiting for him.

"What said Gachette?" he muttered. "That all would wear vizard masks, and that the word is to be 'The little black mole,' and the countersign, 'Across the water.' So! so! all is well, very well," and he urged his horse onward along the track in the copse, keeping, however, a sharp eye upon that track to see that, across it, there lay no fallen trunks which might bring both him and the animal to the ground.

He was better enabled to do this now, because, away to the east, there was rising a late moon which, by this time, was flooding the whole of the place with light; a light that glinted through the trees and in which the leaves that had not yet begun to fall, glistened as they quivered in the soft breeze. And, because of this cheering and swift-growing brightness which imparted a

seeming gaiety and life to what had up to now been so sombre and dark, he felt gay again himself, and would have given something to burst forth with another stave. Yet he knew that he must not do so, that it was not wise to sing now. Those whom he came to meet might think that this was a harum-scarum, mad-pated messenger, who, charged with a mission dealing with murder and death, should ride carolling through the woods.

Wherefore, instead, he drank again, calling silently a toast—not to the scheme he was concerned with, but to a quick receipt of the five hundred guineas.

Then, as he put his flask back into the holster, slapping to the cover with a light-some hand, he started in his saddle and, involuntarily drawing tight his rein, brought the beast he bestrode to its haunches.

"Who are you?" he whispered. "Who and what? And why do you encounter me thus strangely and in silence? Speak! Who are you?" Then in a clear though not loud voice he added, "The little black mole."

Across his path and not more than thirty paces ahead of him there sat four men on horseback, their animals being all abreast so that they formed a barrier through which no single rider could have passed. To the adventurer looking up from the holster over which he had been bending as he fastened its strap, it seemed as if those four masked men—with their eyes glistening in the moonlight through the eyelets of their vizards—must have risen from out of the ground. For he would have sworn they were not there when, a moment before, he had turned his hand down towards his saddle-flap.

"The little black mole, I say," he repeated now, even as he halted his horse and gazed at those men. "The little black mole. Answer and give the countersign." While as he spoke he dropped his hand towards the hilt of his sword. For their silence and, above all, the ominous glitter of their eyes through the mask-holes appalled him, he knew not why.

Then one of the figures seated there said—speaking in French—"Nay, tell us, monsieur, who you are. We desire to know your name."

Hearing this, Starbuck felt a nervous throbbing near his heart. For he felt sure now that these were not the men he was sent to meet. Had they been, they would



MADE THRUST AFTER THRUST AT THOSE WHO SURROUNDED HIM IN THAT MAD RIDE

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undoubtedly have replied with the counter-sign; but this, it was evident, they either could not or would not do. Who then were they? Police, exempts—what?

"Your name," the man who had spoken said again. "And at once."

"By what right do you demand it?" asked Starbuck, observing all of them and wondering, while he did so, if a sudden rush, a sudden prick with the spur to his horse's flank, would carry him through them—especially if he used his sword as well as the pistol in his right holster.

"That we will perhaps answer later. Meanwhile, tell us at once, or——" while, without finishing the sentence, the speaker advanced his horse a few paces nearer to where Starbuck was, he being followed in the action by his companions.

"Oh! as for that," the latter cried, seeing any further parley would be useless, and that, opposed as he was by four men, neither a flight nor a fight would be of any avail, "as for that, you may know it and welcome. 'Tis of good repute in England at least. And borne by many an——"

"Tell it," said the other speaker, interrupting him. "At once."

"'Tis Rupert Frayne. Borne by an English gentleman and——"

"Liar!" exclaimed now another voice.

"Liar! 'tis not so. Instead, it is Starbuck—the name of a sordid knave and adventurer. The name of a man who rides to-night intent on murder."

To describe the amazement which fell upon the vagabond as he heard those words would be impossible, as also it would be equally impossible to depict the fear that rose in his heart as he recognised that he was undone. In some way Gachette and he, and all of them, were betrayed; their plots and schemes were known! He, if not the others, was lost! Instead, his actions are therefore more easily described. Actions that were sudden and violent—the outcome of despair and the approach of an almost certain doom; the actions of one who, caught like a rat in a trap, turns in his dying moment and endeavours to either escape from or rend his captors.

At first—in one hurried moment of resolution—he decided to do the former; to hurl himself against those four men seated almost motionless upon their horses, and to cut his way through them, or to, himself, be hewed to the earth. Then, recognising the hopelessness of success in any such action as

this; knowing, too, that what he had set out to do could never be accomplished now, and that every nerve must be strained towards his own salvation, he came to another decision. In one moment he had wheeled his horse round, and, in another, was riding for his life back along the road he had come.

Yet, even as he did so he knew that the attempt was futile. Behind him came the thud of the hoofs of all the other men's horses, bridle-chains jangled and scabbards rang against flanks in the pursuit—they were gaining on him an instant after the chase began—they were nearing him—they were up to him! Already—in one—in two—in three moments, he could feel the hot breath from an animal's nostrils upon his neck, then the head of one passed by him; its rider's hand was stretched out to clutch at his own rein. And with a snarl, a curse—a hideous curse!—Starbuck cut at that hand with his long-since-unsheathed blade, and a moment later, struck full at his pursuer's head, hurling him wounded to the earth while the horse rushed madly by him, riderless.

But still there were the other three, and they were also close to him now. Close! Ah! did he not know and recognise it as a sword-thrust passed through his sleeve, ripping his bridle-arm open, so that it fell nerveless and helpless by his side! Know it, yes! Yet, knowing, he was determined never to be taken. Instead, therefore, turning round in his saddle, he dealt blow after blow, and made thrust after thrust, at those who surrounded him in that mad ride; his sword sometimes guarding his head and body for a moment, and then darting forth again. But that he was done for, he knew now. He was wounded in three places—the arm, the shoulder, and the head—he was being blinded by the blood that ran from the latter. The end had come!

Understanding that it had so come, he made his last effort. Maddened, desperate, his teeth gleaming in the moonlight like those of some infuriated animal, he thrust blindly again and again, then threw up his arms with one long cry of agony and fell headlong into the dusty road. The weapon of one of his pursuers had gone through him from back to breast.

"At last," said one of the three remaining men, "at last. Quick, dismount and see if the dog is dead," and he glanced down at the great crimson pool that had already



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### CHAPTER V

"In that mansion used to be  
Free-hearted hospitality."

accumulated round the huddled-up body of the fallen adventurer where it lay in the road.

"Almost," said a second and younger man, "was he worthy of a better fate. He should have been an honest man and not a villain; a lion and not a jackal."

Then the speaker stooped down and, tearing open Starbuck's vest, thrust in his hand and felt in the region of the heart. "It beats still," he muttered, even as he drew forth that hand again all damp and red, and, shuddering slightly while he gazed at it, wiped it upon a tussock of grass growing close by the spot where he knelt.

"No matter for that," replied one of the other men, speaking in Low Dutch; "who cares whether he still lives or not! Instead, feel in all his pockets, see what is about him. We may unearth a great plot." Whereupon, he who had felt Starbuck's heart began to search his pockets.

It was a strange, heterogeneous mass which he found in them. A purse full of louis d'or—those which Gachette had given him—the wine bills which he had paid on his route—a small phial full of some liquid that had neither smell nor colour—a letter from some friend in Paris appointing a rendezvous—a wisp of grey hair in a tiny satin bag—it belonging, perhaps, to that mother of whom he had not long since thought!

And, also, they found a paper on which was written down that information about the Elector of Hanover's journey from Herrenhausen to the Hague which Leicester North had given to Gachette in 'La Pomme d'Or' in Paris, and which Starbuck had put in his pocket for future references. A paper forming the fly-leaf of one of the large folded letters of the period, which had undoubtedly been hastily torn off from the other portion on which some message had been written. A fly-leaf that, when folded, formed the outside on which the address would be written, and which in fact was addressed to Mr. Leicester North, in the Rue Marché aux Fleurs in Paris.

"That is all," said the young man, looking up at the others, and again regarding his hands and wiping them on the grass with an ineffable appearance of disgust and horror.

"Good," said the man above who had told him to search Starbuck's pockets. "Good. Away and leave him where he lies. He will give no more trouble."

HAVING written those letters of which Rosamund had spoken—one being to her father, who had returned to London for some weeks (he leaving his daughter in Paris with the Fräulein until he should return, so that she might spend some time in the enjoyment of the society of many other English friends of theirs now resident in the city), and another to her lover, asking him if he had changed his mind upon the subject that they had agreed to discuss that morning—she descended to their sitting-room below. It was her intention in doing so to ask Anna Groesbeck to accompany her to the bureau of the *Postes du Roi*, there to hand in the former letter for despatch to England, and at the same time to obtain a messenger who would carry the other to Versailles. For, although neither timid nor nervous where she was herself concerned, the girl was always more or less so with regard to her lover. Was he not a Jacobite; one who, although there was no price set on his head, was still an adherent of that unhappy cause, and, from being such, one who might at any moment become engulfed in the dangers that followed the adherents of the Stuarts' wheresoever they might happen to be?

For the King of France—he who had once waged war against England; he who, although never doing so successfully, had striven against her for so long a period; he who with royal magnanimity—self-interested as that magnanimity might be!—had sheltered the unfortunate James, and had acknowledged the claims of his son, while extending ample hospitality to James and his wife and child, had now, it seemed, for the sake of peace, withdrawn his espousal of their cause.

James III., as he was termed by his followers, had been requested to leave Paris; George I. was acknowledged by Louis as King of England; the Earl of Stair was to come as George the First's minister and plenipotentiary. Would not all Jacobites be now, therefore, in almost as much danger, Rosamund reflected, in Paris as in London? Would Louis hesitate to give up to George's vengeance any one of them who might be sheltering in the former place, if asked to do so? And

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though Rupert Frayne might be concerned in no plots or schemes—as indeed the better part of the Jacobites were not concerned, they being content to stand aside sadly and to wait for the return of happier and brighter days, if they ever dawned—who could tell how easily the names of these unhappy onlookers might be connected with those of the more violent espousers of the cause? Nay! what was worse—who could tell how soon they might also be made responsible for the acts, not only of the more violent, though honest and straightforward members of that cause, but for, as well, the acts done by unscrupulous impostors? Impostors who were not Jacobites from conviction, but from greed and the desire for gain; vagabonds who would attach themselves to any cause so long as they were paid for that attachment.

Knowing all these things as Rosamund Welby did know them, girl though she was, it was not strange perhaps that her lover's failure to come at the appointed hour should fill her with a vague alarm.

"For," she said to herself, as she descended the stairs, "he has never failed before, never omitted to keep tryst. Never! What can have prevented him from coming to-day of all days—the day on which he was to tell me which of two things should take precedence in his life—his love for me or his espousal of a poor, fallen cause? And yet I thought I knew, I thought I might have sworn that he would be here this morning, that I could have said what his answer would be."

She had reached the little salon door by now, while, as she turned the handle and entered the room, she experienced a faint feeling of surprise at discovering that it was empty and the *Fräulein* absent. For it was not usual for her calm and phlegmatic companion to do anything on the spur of the moment, and Rosamund knew well enough that Anna Groesbeck had not intended to quit the house before the afternoon. But, as was always her invariable custom wherever she might happen to be, she was used to walk at that time for an hour and a half; she generally preferring to do so alone, since, as she said, Rosamund's more stately mode of progression was not fast enough for her.

But, now, Anna had undoubtedly gone out, since she had not ascended to her bedroom, which communicated with the

one occupied by Rosamund, and since, too, her hood, or head-dress, was absent; and Rosamund, gazing idly out of the window up the Rue de la Croisade, wondered if she should proceed to the bureau of the *Postes du Roi* ere they took their midday meal or wait until her companion returned.

As she did so, and while she had almost decided to go out at once since she desired that her letter to Rupert should not be delayed, she gave a faint start and murmured to herself—

"Surely, surely that is Leicester North, and he is talking to the old man who lives above—the man who has a French name—what is't?—Gach—Gach—Gachette—ay! 'tis that—and who has the French tongue like a Frenchman yet is none, he being an Englishman beyond all doubt. Poor Leicester North!" she continued. "So you, too, are here in Paris, and known to that old man. Poor Leicester! I wonder if you are watched by the schemers and plotters in this place. If so, you will fare ill. The earthenware pipkin cannot swim with the brazen one; you will be sunk and lost if it be so. You are too weak to float in such company."

Whereby it may be gathered that he whom she thus apostrophised was well known to her. In actual fact such was indeed the case, for, not long ago, not a year since, and when all London lay under the December snow, Mr. Welby had brought into his parlour in Holles Street a miserable-looking, shivering young man, clad in a rough frieze cloak from beneath which his whinyard stuck out in its broken scabbard, and had presented him to pretty Rosamund as she sat before the great roaring fire of sea-coal and huge logs, reading a romance.

"Rosamund, my girl," her father had then exclaimed heartily, "I bring to supper one whom I have known since he was so high," and he held out his hand at a level with his knee, "the son of an old friend, a worthy knight now dead, Sir Houston North. Make him welcome."

That Rosamund did make him welcome one may be sure, she doing so not more at her father's bidding than at the bidding of her own heart. For she could see at a glance how poor the man must be, since his coat and cloak were frayed and ragged, his linen sour and dingy, the lace he wore, such as it was, torn and discoloured, and his wig a stranger to the perruquier for



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many a long day. She made him welcome, carving the cold turkey lavishly—the carving being always the lady's duty in those days—and heaping it on his plate, while seeing, too, that the sailet was replenished, and, with a glance, bidding the waiting-maids to fill his glass again and again with Lisbon. So that the poor scarecrow thawed and began to feel warm and almost happy at last, and—but this was when he had eaten his supper, and was no longer hunger-stung—was fain to observe how pretty his young hostess was, and to laugh when Mr. Welby asked him if such a supper was not as good as the Shoe Lane ordinary which he had prevented him from going to.

"Ay, in truth it is," Leicester North had replied, his weak, watery blue eyes still on the girl's beauty, "but what would you have! My grandfather lost almost all in the cause of the Martyr King, my father finished the ruin of our family by remaining faithful to King James. Are not hunger, cold and poverty the lot of those who believe in the divine right of kings?"

From Rosamund's soft eyes there shone a look of womanly pity as the poor outcast spoke (they said in those days that in all England there was no woman whatsoever whose heart was not in sympathy with the Stuarts, no matter though brother, father, or husband might be Hanoverian either from conviction or expediency), while Mr. Welby shrugged his shoulders, saying, "My lad! their day is done; rightly or wrongly, it is so. If you would live and wax fat, eschew politics." Then he continued, "Did I not see thy name in the journal a day or so ago as one who—who——"

"Was enlisting men for the future lawful King? Ay, you did. What then?"

"We call him the Pretender here," his host answered very quietly. "Yet, believe me, you will do no good. Leicester," he said, laying his hand gently on the other's sleeve, "let me counsel you. If you cannot rest quiet and keep your politics to yourself, at least do no such foolish thing as go a-listing. Nay, better far go and take the oath of adherence before some magistrate, and then——"

"Never!" the young man cried, "never, so long as I live. What! forswear those for whom we have lost all, those whom we love and reverence, those for whom I wear these and these and these," and he pointed

to the various portions of his ragged garments. "Never! Nay, if you were not for the Elector, the man who may become the usurper when Anne is gone—if this were not your house, I would go down upon my knees now and cry a health to my King—to our King—James. To him who should be King now though his sister reigns."

"Instead," said Mr. Welby, calm and unruffled as usual (while Rosamund beneath her breath murmured, "Alas! the unhappy young man"), "drink your wine and be merry. And—Leicester—since now you know both my child and my London home, make yourself welcome always! This thing here"—and he touched his daughter's cheek—"is a merry one herself, and loveth mirth and jollity. Many a City madam and her daughters come to this house, and sometimes, too, those from the Court-end—and thereby you shall alter your ways. She is," he said, regarding Rosamund with a smile, "somewhat of a Jack herself, yet openly speaks no politics. My lad, come when you will. I knew your father well—very well, and he befriended me when I was young and needed friends."

"Ay," said Rosamund, standing up before him as he prepared to go, there being a light of welcome in her eyes—a welcome of pity and compassion. "Do so. Come—and—well!—we will talk no politics."

"I will come," Leicester North said. "God, He knows, a house—a greeting—even a fire and food, have been strangers to me for long, or, at least, but casual acquaintances. And," he said, looking at Rosamund, "I will respect your father's hearth, there shall be no politics talked by me. Yet here, here," and with his finger he touched his heart, "it must be ever the same. Ever and always. I have no knee for any but my God and my King."

So he did come many times and often, and was made welcome by Rosamund and her father, and was kindly treated by the Court ladies and the City madams he met there, who, even if they feared to say so, were very full of compassion for him and his fidelity to the outcast Royal Family. He strove, too, to bring neither trouble nor discredit on the one house in London whose doors were ever open to him, and spoke no word on the subject dearest to his heart, while even endeavouring to furnish up his threadbare clothes and torn, worn lace, so that neither the ladies of

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fashion nor the merchants' wives—the latter always in their costly silks and satins and wearing rich jewellery—should be ashamed to rub shoulders with him. Whereby, at last, he knew no longer the pangs of hunger nor the bitter tooth of that cold which, before, could never be thawed out of him—he knew where a good meal was always to be had and a fire to warm him, and, better still, where kindly words of greeting were always proffered.

And Mr. Welby, standing before his own blazing hearth, would strike him affectionately on the back and say: "In truth, Leicester, you are a good lad, if but a weak one. Still, that is no affair of mine. You would never cause a hunt through my house as though 'twere a harbourage of Jacobites, and you do not talk politics; that is all I ask. Yet, alter your ways. Alter your ways. Thus you shall be happy and comfortable." While, as he spoke, he would sometimes let his eyes rest for a moment on the pretty face and figure of some well-to-do citizen's daughter, as though desiring to indicate to Leicester North how, that way, might happiness and comfort be obtained.

But the other would answer, "I shall never change. Never. Nor shall I ever be happy until I see our Queen's brother her accepted heir and successor."

He found out, however, one thing in his visits to Holles Street, namely, that he was not the only Jacobite who went there. For sometimes he encountered amongst others in Rosamund's parlour a tall, handsome young man richly dressed in scarlet and adorned with rings and costly lace, and wearing an ivory-hilted sword. A young man whom he knew to be a follower of the same cause as himself, though one who would have been described in the jargon of the day, more as a Tory than a Jacobite. One, indeed, of those persons of whom it has been said that they looked upon the Act of Succession which would, and did, shortly place the Elector of Hanover on Anne's throne when she was gone, more with indifference and resigned submission than with any idea of overt violence in the future. As regards this young man, Leicester North learnt something else too, partly by overhearing what the other visitors to Holles Street whispered, and partly by what he himself observed, he being no fool, although, perhaps, a weakling, as Mr. Welby had termed him in-

wardly. He discovered that this gentleman and Rosamund loved each other. For he had observed their glances now and again—once, when they were talking in the dark passage, he had noticed the girl's hand playing with the lace fal-lal upon her lover's breast, and he had also once seen that lover kiss a flower softly ere he gave it to her. Surely, if those who are acquainted with the gentle art of love have told us poor chroniclers the truth, this was enough to enlighten Leicester North upon the state of things that existed between his hostess and the handsome Jacobite.

"I hear, sir," said this gentleman, whose name Leicester now knew to be Rupert Frayne, and who, the former had learnt, was of considerable wealth as well as of good station in his county, "that you and I think alike upon an important matter. That, indeed, we both disapprove strongly of the Act of Succession—which, if all they say about the Queen's health is true, is like enough ere long to come into force."

"My feelings," replied North, while he thought how lukewarmly this handsome, bravely clad young gentleman spoke upon the subject which should have stirred to passion every fibre in his body, "my feelings are that it should be resisted in every way possible. To prevent that Act of Succession ever coming into force we who espouse the King's cause should stop at nothing to prevent usurpation."

"Nay, nay," replied the other. "That would not do. The new King is summoned by Act of Parliament. By Act of Parliament he must reign."

\* \* \* \* \*

As Rosamund stood now at the window of the little salon on the ground-floor of 'La Pomme d'Or' she thought of all that had happened in her London home more than nine months before, and, while thus thinking, determined that she would renew her acquaintance with Leicester North. She had always liked him with the liking that is born of pity and compassion; she had felt sorry for him, and felt so now, and regretted to see him in the company of that old man who dwelt above in a top room of the inn, and whose visitors, as she had noticed more than once, were royster-ing-looking men and revellers. Wherefore, going to the door giving on to the street, she commenced to walk towards where North stood some fifty yards away, talking to the old man named Gachette and another

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"WHAT IS IT?" SHE SAID NOW TO THIS MAN AS HE APPROACHED HER

clad in a grey frock, who looked like an ordinary lower-class Frenchman.

Yet she was astonished, too, at what she perceived as she drew near. For, on Gachette observing her approach, which he was the first to do, she saw him touch

Leicester North's arm, while he, observing her in his turn, at once moved away and mingled with the crowd of workmen and workgirls that was streaming along the street to the midday meal. She observed, also, that the man in grey crossed the road

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at the same time as though directing his steps towards the inn, while Gachette himself shuffled towards it, though keeping to the original side of the road he had been on.

### CHAPTER VI

"The devil often wins the first trick, but rarely the last."

SOMEWHAT surprised at such a break-up of the small group of men who had been talking together before her appearance in the street, Rosamund, after going a few yards further, retraced her steps to the inn, while wondering what could have been the meaning of their conduct. Gachette of course knew her only by sight as a resident in the same house as himself, but—Leicester North! What could be the meaning of his avoiding her thus? What! Why should he avoid her, the girl who had been his friend and hostess in the winter—the girl who had not only seconded warmly her father's desire that he should make their house as nearly as possible a home and place of shelter, but had also made a friend of him?

It was, in truth, inexplicable! Yet she imagined she could divine a reason for such conduct. She thought it was highly probable that (now the good Queen was dead and in her grave, while the Act of Succession of which they had so often talked had come into full operation, and the stranger King was about to proceed to the throne he had been called to) Leicester North might be in Paris for a purpose. It would not be strange, she reflected, if, in this hotbed of politics where so many plots and schemes of various kinds had been hatched again and again, he should be engaged in hatching one himself, or, rather, should be in the hands of those who were more fitted for hatching them than he. Or, again, he might have fallen on evil days once more. She remembered they had not seen him in Holles Street for some month or two before they themselves, her father and herself and Anna Groesbeck, had set out for Paris; it was possible that, in his renewed poverty, he was not desirous that she should see and question him.

So, dismissing the subject temporarily from her mind, she returned to the indoor, or rather to the entrance of the great courtyard.

But she was again astonished when, on

reaching it, she saw that the man in grey had also made his way to beneath the archway of the courtyard entrance and was hovering about the place in an undecided way. She saw, too, that he perceived her approach, and, on doing so, came towards her in a hesitating manner as though almost afraid to address her.

"What is it?" she said now to this man as he approached her and, by taking off his hat with considerable politeness, showed that there was no doubt of his intention to speak to her. "What? Have you anything to say to me?"

"I have if, as I believe, I am addressing the demoiselle Welby."

"As you believe! Pray were you not but a moment since in conversation with the elderly man who dwells above in this house, and with another English gentleman, one Mr. North?"

"It is so—though I know not their names. Seeing those gentlemen issue from their inn a few minutes before you yourself left it, I made bold to ask them if they could tell me whether it was true that you dwell here temporarily?"

"Wherefore? What is your business with me?" Rosamund asked, her eyes upon the man, while with her calm glance she observed him minutely.

"I am the bearer of a message to you from—from—well! from *un monsieur*. A countryman of mademoiselle."

"*Un monsieur*! A countryman of mine!" Rosamund repeated, while feeling sorely disturbed at the man's words. There was but one countryman of hers in Paris who would be likely to write to her just now, she thought, and that was the countryman whom she loved and whom she had expected to see that morning. If it was he who sent her a letter instead of coming to her at the 'Pomme d'Or' as had been arranged, then something must have happened. Perhaps, therefore, it was not strange that some feeling of vague disturbance should arise in her heart.

"Where is the message?" she asked, endeavouring while she did so to stifle any outward appearance of that disturbance from being visible upon her countenance. "Give it to me at once."

Whereon, obedient to Rosamund's command, the man felt in his breast-pocket and produced from it a paper folded and sealed in the usual manner, and addressed to her. Yet as she took it from him, she felt a new



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and stranger disturbance of mind at observing that the handwriting was an unknown one—that it was, indeed, in a woman's writing. Of this there could be no doubt—the long sloping loops of the letters, the thinness of the down lines, which equalled that of the up lines, showed such to be the case.

"From whom did you receive this?" she asked the man in grey, even as she still held it in her hand, hesitating to open it. "It is from no 'countryman' of mine."

"From," the fellow replied—somewhat hesitatingly it seemed, and with also, as it appeared to Rosamund, a tone in his voice denoting sympathy—"from the person to whose house the gentleman has been carried at Vincennes. From the lady of the house."

The girl's heart seemed to stand still at these words, yet, even while it did so, she wasted no more time in delay, but instantly broke the seal and unfolded the letter, while she repeated nervously to herself, "The

house to which he has been carried. A letter written by the lady of the house. What can have happened?"

"Madame," the letter ran in French, "I have bad news for you!"

"Oh!" wailed Rosamund. "Bad news! Oh!"

"There has been an accident to Monsieur Fresne," for thus the writer spelt the name; "he has been thrown from his horse in the Bois de Vincennes and brought here. He desires me to write to you, his right arm being broken, and to request you to come to him. But, also, he bids me tell you to be of good cheer. The disaster will keep him confined to the house for some time, but there is little else to be dreaded. The bearer of this will conduct you to him." At the end of the letter there was a woman's signature, the Christian name of which Rosamund could decipher easily, it being *Andrée*, while the latter part was illegible.

Distracted as she was by this letter, there was still room left in her mind for utter



AFTER WHICH SHE WROTE HASTILY A FEW LINES TO ANNA GROESBECK

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astonishment. For how could it be that Rupert should have met with an accident in the Bois de Vincennes? In the Bois de Vincennes, which was on the east side of Paris, while Versailles, where her lover lived, was on the south-west! It seemed incredible!

Yet, while she thought thus, the girl remembered that Rupert owned more than one horse of the best breed, and was in the habit of riding for two hours early every morning, and she reflected that, in that space of time, he might easily skirt the south of Paris and reach Vincennes, which, after all, was but a matter of three or four leagues from Versailles. And she had heard him say that he knew every path and alley around the latter place now, and that he must find some new rides for variety's sake. While—and than this no further argument or self-communing was necessary—he had met with his accident at Vincennes. That ended the matter!

"Come with me," she said now to the man who stood regarding her as she read the letter. "Come to my parlour. I will go with you at once to Vincennes. You can obtain a conveyance?"

"I came in one," the fellow replied, "and have left it in the next street at the auberge known as 'La Lutte Eternelle.' It can be fetched or—or—we can walk to it."

"So be it. But first I must leave a letter for my companion who is with me. Come, therefore, to my sitting-room."

As they went towards this room, and ere they entered the corridor leading to it, she asked the man if he had seen the accident or knew of any of the circumstances. If such were the case, she continued, then she begged him to tell her all. Monsieur Frayne was, she said—openly and without any false shame—her affianced husband, monsieur would very well understand what her anxiety must be.

"Nay, mademoiselle," he said. "I saw it not. I am a servant and—and—have been despatched to fetch you. I wish," he added, with his eyes upon her fresh young beauty while observing, too, the look of sorrow and consternation which had by now clouded that beauty, "that this unpleasant task had not fallen to me."

"I thank you for your sympathy." Then, remembering that she had seen this servant in conversation with Gachette and Leicester North; remembering, too, how the latter had turned away and avoided her

as she approached the group, Rosamund said—

"And—and—did you tell them when you asked if they knew me, of what an unhappy message you were the bearer? Did you tell them of the accident to the gentleman?"

"I—yes—yes—I—did," the man said, while seeming considerably taken aback at her question. "I—did—indeed. Alas! 'tis sad. And the younger gentleman—oh! yes—he in particular—doubtless mademoiselle observed—he was much distressed. Oh! very much so. He withdrew as mademoiselle approached. For sure he could not bear to witness her reception of the news."

"Ay," Rosamund replied, as going now to the table she drew the standish towards her in preparation for leaving a note for Anna Groesbeck when she should return. "Ay, I observed it. I knew that young gentleman last year when he was welcome at my father's house. It would be passing strange if he sympathised not with me." But to herself she said, "It would indeed have been strange if Leicester North had shown no delicacy in so sad a business. He met my Rupert often at our fireside and knew of our love. I might have guessed, when he withdrew at my approach, that he had some good reason for doing so."

"You knew him well," the man who said he was a servant repeated, as Rosamund commenced the note to Anna Groesbeck. "Mademoiselle knows him well? And—he has been welcome at her father's house?"

"Yes, very oft. Why?" she exclaimed, looking full at the other, and noticing that in his voice there had been the slightest tone of surprise as he echoed her words. "Why! do you know aught against him? Anything that should make him unworthy of a gentlewoman's acquaintance?"

"Nay, nay, mademoiselle," the servant hastened to say, with a truly French deprecatory action of his hands. "Nay, never. Only!—I should have thought he would have—well!—have stayed to salute mademoiselle, if no more, the circumstances being as she says. But, doubtless, it was the gentleman's sympathy for her which caused him to withdraw. Doubtless, too, mademoiselle has judged aright."

"I think so," Rosamund said quietly.

After which she wrote hastily a few lines to Anna Groesbeck, telling her that she had gone to Vincennes to see her lover, and



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describing what had befallen him. She said, too, that she would be back at night for sure, and that her friend was to be under no kind of apprehension for her. After which, she folded and sealed the letter and placed it against the standish in the middle of the table, so that in no way could Anna fail to see it on her entry. Yet, as she did so, she muttered to herself, "I would I knew what could have taken Anna forth, or why she returns not. In truth I do."

"Come," she said now to the man as, removing the three-cornered hat which was still on her head, she donned the philomottus riding-cloak she sometimes wore when driving, and lightly drew the hood above her hair. "Come. Oh! pray Heaven that

we find all well when we arrive." Then, even as they went forth into the street and prepared to walk to 'La Lutte Eternelle' she said, "What is the name of the lady who signs this letter? I cannot very well decipher it."

"The name of—the lady—who signs—it?" the man asked, stammering, and seeming much taken aback. "The name of—the lady—oh! *avec ça*—naturally mademoiselle would not know it. Naturally. Naturally."

"I asked you what it was," Rosamund said, "it being very certain that I could by no means know it."

"It is," the servant replied, his manner being still strange,— "it is Duval, a common name in France, mademoiselle, a common name."

"Duval. Nay! Nay! Surely that is not the name! It was almost illegible, but not that, I will be sworn."

"Peste! To be sure!" the other exclaimed, snapping his fingers as though at his own stupidity. "To be sure. I have the head of a snail. Duval was her maiden name. *Nom d'un chien!* I am a fool. Of course not! She would sign her married name—she was married but two months past!—the name of Marcelin. One that is also a common name."

"Let us see," said Rosamund, as now they drew near 'La Lutte Eternelle,' while putting her hand in her pocket to draw forth the letter. "Let us see." But as she did so, the man exclaimed, remarking her action—

"Mademoiselle forgets—doubtless in her agitation. But—but—she left that letter lying on the table after she had perused it again, and ere writing to the other young lady she spoke of, her companion. She left it close by the letter she wrote to that lady."

"It is true," Rosamund said, withdrawing her hand from her empty pocket, "very true. And so, indeed,



LEAVING MONSIEUR GACHETTE TALKING TO THE SIAMESE CROW

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I did. Ah, well! doubtless Anna will think I left it for her perusal, and to explain more clearly my hasty scrawl. Perhaps 'twas best that I forgot it."

By now they were at the other inn—one not so comfortable-looking nor so ancient as 'La Pomme d'Or'—and, here, the man in grey, after going into one of the stables, returned with a coach-driver who at once commenced to put in the horses to a great lumbering *Berline* that stood in the yard. Which being accomplished, the former motioned to Rosamund to take her seat, he giving the man instructions to return at once to Vincennes.

"If mademoiselle will permit," he said, "I will accompany her inside. I am somewhat stiff from rheumatism and an old wound received from mademoiselle's countrymen some years ago at Hochstedt," and he smiled pleasantly as though to intimate that such things were best forgotten, or, at least, not remembered with bitterness—while, receiving an indifferent consent to

his doing what he suggested, he at once got into the carriage and took his place respectfully in front of her.

And so they drove off to Vincennes, leaving Paris and the inns known as 'La Lutte Eternelle' and 'La Pomme d'Or' behind them, as well as the crowds of people scurrying along the busy streets, and all the noise and racket of the city. And leaving, too, Monsieur Gachette talking to the Siamese crow swinging on a perch in the court-yard of 'La Pomme d'Or'—a weird and demoniacal-looking bird that a returned missionary had presented to the hostess. Chuckling as well as talking to the creature, while ever glancing into the inn-passage until Rosamund and the man in grey had been gone some ten minutes, when he unconcernedly walked into the former's deserted sitting-room, and, taking up both the letters she had left behind her, dropped them in his pocket and went out. After which he proceeded to his own room at the top of the house.

(To be continued.)



## A Song of Hope

ROBIN! in the leafy wood  
Piping loud and oft,  
Robin! by the meadow brook,  
In the apple-croft,  
Trilling low and soft:  
Tell us why such songs you sing—  
Are you calling back the Spring?  
Dreary Winter first must come  
When the birds are dumb.

Slow between its grassy banks  
Runs the silver Team,  
And a few late Autumn flowers  
Droop their heads and seem  
In a golden dream:  
Swallows flit from cottage eaves,  
Sadly fall the dying leaves,  
Only you are gay and strong,  
Singing all day long!

Piped the Robin lustily,  
"All things show God's praise  
When the Earth is young and glad  
In a thousand ways;  
But in darker days,  
Lest of music there should lack,  
Robins never turn their back,  
Each puts on his scarlet vest,  
Carolling his best!

"When the glistening snowflakes fall,  
When the flowers are dead,  
Ere the gallant Crocus dares  
Lift his royal head,  
I shall come instead!  
Singing softly in your ear,  
Songs of precious things and dear—  
Fuller life and fairer scope,  
And fresh Springs of Hope!"

CHRISTIAN BURKE.

# The State of the Stage

BY DAVID WILLIAMSON

THE theatre has been a battle-ground for centuries, but that is no reason why successive generations should not discuss it. A special reason why the theatre should be discussed is to be found in the immense growth of theatre-going in the last few years. It has been estimated by a competent authority that for every twenty persons who went to the theatre forty years ago there are one thousand to-day. That in itself proclaims the importance of the matter. All round the metropolis there have sprung up suburban theatres, in which many thousands are entertained every night in the year; and in our cities and towns there have been built theatres vying with the most elegant playhouses in London. The total number of people employed in these theatres has grown to many thousands; the capital embarked in theatrical enterprises amounts to several millions; the audiences represent a large proportion of the adult population. Whereas the attendance of church-goers thirty years ago at theatres was abnormal, to-day it occasions little remark. And yet the improvement in the drama which it was prophesied would result from Christian people's patronage of the stage does not seem to have come. Indeed, there are critics, whose duty it is to attend all the theatres, who tell us that there has been a steady degeneration, and that to-day there are plays produced amid enthusiasm at some of the principal playhouses which are a disgrace to every one concerned. The young people of our families go as soon as they can to the theatre, and the connexion between the Church and the stage, already close, seems to grow closer each year. Society welcomes the actor and actress; the sons and daughters of clergymen go on the stage as a matter of course, just as their parents sit in the stalls admiring them. Our illustrated magazines and newspapers devote a large amount of space to portraits and chronicles of the popular "stars" of the stage; and our hoardings are covered with huge posters illustrating incidents in plays.

All these facts are admitted by any student of our national life. But what I want to emphasise in this article is the

present state of the stage as judged by its own upholders, and to ask with all sincerity whether Christian people ought to continue their patronage of theatres where such plays as those I mention are produced. I know full well how easy it is to evade personal responsibility; I know how many playgoers claim that the stage is but a mirror of life; I know how those who wish to go to theatres can find abundant reasons for the habit. So long ago as the days of Louis XIV. this question was under discussion, for the king asked Bossuet as to the lawfulness of the recreation, and received this reply from the famous preacher: "*Sire, il y a de grands exemples pour, et de grandes autorités contre.*" On those who conscientiously refrain from attending the theatre no responsibility, except that of honest remonstrance, rests. But that responsibility, so far as the present writer is concerned, shall be discharged; and readers of this article can have no excuse for saying afterwards that they were not aware of the decadence of the modern theatre. If they decide to make the matter of playgoing an affair of conscience, I shall be quite content. If, realising that the stage is at the present day providing plays which are full of poison, they resolve to use their best endeavours to counteract this evil influence on the rising race, then my distasteful duty will have had its reward.

Robert Louis Stevenson said that a good play must be founded "on one of the passionate *crucés* of life, where duty and inclination come nobly to the grapple." It would require a pair of Sam Weller's "patent double million magnifyin' glass microscopes of hextra power" to discover many plays during the last five years—to go no further—which have answered to this definition of a good play. The "musical comedy," which has proved the most attractive form of dramatic performance, makes no attempt to deal with such wrestling matches between duty and inclination. "Can it be doubted," Mr. William Archer (one of our most eminent dramatic critics) wrote not long ago, "that musical comedy, English and American, does more than ten thousand pulpits can undo, to glorify

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and enforce the sporting, gambling, bar-haunting, champagne-drinking, flashy and dissolute ideal of life which dominates that class of production? Do we not see whole regiments of young men modelling themselves in dress, manners, vocabulary, and, as far as possible, in morals, upon this or that popular comedian whose leering inanities they regard as the last word of human wit?" The critic of the *Westminster Gazette*, whose liking for good dramatic work is as undisguised as is his ability to criticise the drama, wrote of a comedy, produced not long ago at one of our greatest theatres in London: "If you think it funny to hear Julius Cæsar say, 'Conduct our wife to a tram,' or watch him doing comic business with a cigar; if it appears comic to you to find Cæsar as a manicurist who uses an omnibus bell-punch in collecting his fees; if such wit as Cleopatra's observation that the public men did not come to meet her because they were in the public-houses, you will have plenty to your taste." There was dancing in this piece which the critic describes as "mere ugly vulgarity," and he adds: "If our first-night audiences at this class of piece possessed any taste, this lamentable degradation of dancing would have been received with howls of indignation, instead of which it had no little applause."

But it is time to turn to another kind of play, and we select one which was an immense success at Drury Lane. With the rage for realism which has run wild, the marriage service was given on the stage, and a hymn was sung at the mock wedding of the heroine. Well might a dramatic critic say, "It appears to me that much if not all of this was unnecessary, and that the presentation of such sacred matters upon the stage is by no means desirable." But this introduction of what the critic calls "sacred matters" was eclipsed recently when the presence of Christ was actually simulated upon the stage by a bright shaft of light. The audacious blasphemy met with a few, a very few, remonstrances, and the play was performed night after night in the presence of immense audiences and was patronised more than once by the Royal Family. And yet the censor of plays has not permitted a character representing the prophet Mohammed to step upon the stage for fear of hurting the susceptibilities of his followers!

People who defend the theatre are continually saying that "of course there are theatres and theatres." I admit that there is a wide difference between the magnificent theatres patronised by the wealthy classes in the West of our metropolis, and the dingy houses in the East End; but I feel inclined to add that I think the difference is all to the advantage of the East End theatres. *The Gay Lord Quex*, a play wherein "words and phrases fall from the mouths of the artists which make the listener catch his breath and move uneasily in his seat"—I quote from the *Daily Telegraph*, which is not in the least Puritanic—was produced at a splendid theatre in the West End. A little while before this play was produced, Mr. John Hare, who plays the principal part in it, was denouncing Ibsen's plays; and yet, according to the critic of the *Westminster Gazette*, in *The Gay Lord Quex* he presents a piece "with a wealth of indelicate detail as great in quantity as could be collected from all the Ibsen plays offered to the British public." I take another instance of the kind of play which finds popularity at a West End theatre, as an answer to those who would tell us that "there are theatres and theatres." I will not advertise the play in question, further than to say that it attracted attention in 1898. Of this play, one of our leading dramatic critics had the courage to write the day after its production: "I feel disgusted that I should have been invited to witness such a work. Sometimes one is forced to speak strongly, and this is an occasion in point. No man should take a woman whom he respects to see it." Now this was not a play brought before the public by an inexperienced tyro, or produced at a minor theatre. It was the work of a well-known dramatist, and it was introduced at one of our "best" houses by one of our foremost actors. The plot defies reproduction, even summarised briefly, in these pages.

Mr. Beerbohm Tree wrote to *The Times* in 1894 protesting against the severe criticism which had been passed upon certain plays. He said, and I am glad to recall his words: "I hold an immoral play is one which deals in a spirit of flippancy with those passions 'which are the very central fact of life'; which makes a jest of virtue; which flatters vice; which panders to the lower instincts of our nature; and which clothes the nakedness of evil with a transparent and



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alluring garment." We wonder if Mr. Tree would be prepared to assert that plays of the description just given have not of recent years been produced at several of the leading theatres. The correspondence in which his letter appeared was connected with a play produced by Mr. Tree himself. He challenged his opponents to cite a single passage in this play which could be described in the words quoted, and he said he had not received a single letter pointing to the immoralities which a correspondent had "discovered." Finally Mr. Tree declared that "after all, the final arbiters of this question are the general public who pay for their seats, and who, if they are displeased, will not encourage others to attend the theatre." I cannot agree that because the public choose to patronise certain plays, and afterwards to recommend them to their friends, the question of whether those plays are immoral or not is settled. There are plenty of evil things in this world that people are ready enough to pay for, and even to recommend, but that does not absolve the State or public opinion, and especially Christian opinion, from preventing the transaction. The talk about the play-going public being "the final arbiters of this question" is utterly illogical so long as we have a censor paid by the State to license the plays which are presented.

Mr. John Hare seems to have felt specially injured by the attacks which were made on *The Gay Lord Quex* during the debate in the House of Commons raised by Mr. Samuel Smith. He said at a public dinner: "I confess to having noticed with amazement that in the recent debate in the House of Commons not one member in the whole of that vast assembly could be found to make a serious reply to a serious charge—a reply which might have been placed side by side with the attack, and read by our countrymen whose good opinion we value." The House is not the "vast assembly" of Mr. Hare's imagination, but it has 670 members representing all shades of opinion on questions of morals. Surely the absence of a single member who could satisfy Mr. Hare and his friends with a "serious reply to a serious charge" proves one thing conclusively—that there is no "serious reply" capable of being made.

One of the characters in a play produced in 1901 remarked, "The public likes a noise; that's why American entertainments

succeed." Certainly the noise in some of the so-called musical comedies produced in London of recent years has been the least objectionable feature in them. Of this very play a critic in the leading evening journal in London wrote: "I think it may be fairly said that from beginning to end of the book there is not a single *mot* that any reasonable person could call *bon*, whether original or borrowed." The three quotations which the critic made from this play were such as ought never to have passed the censor. One of these side-comments, put by the author into the mouth of a popular actress, was nothing short of disgusting, and cannot be mentioned in these pages. Mr. R. C. Carton, who began by writing plays which won the commendation of people desirous of wholesome entertainment, makes one of the characters in his play *The Undercurrent*, say, "To aim high is bad theatrical shooting." Apparently, he has expressed his own opinion in this epigram, for there is a long distance between the honest humour and pathos of *Liberty Hall* and the unpleasant plot of *Wheels within Wheels*. It is no wonder that the *Pall Mall Gazette*, recalling Mr. Carton's article of years ago, entitled "A Plea for the Innocuous," says: "Formerly it was Mr. R. C. Carton who, with smooth, seductive words, strove to lure the misled public from the path of error. This time it would be the turn of a sorrowing public to wrestle with a misled Mr. R. C. Carton." Playwrights who commence their career with wholesome work bow at last to the demand for plays dealing with disagreeable and revolting situations.

Not content with home manufactures, the British playgoer has lately crowded in larger numbers than ever before to see imported plays, which have been of even more *risqué* nature than those written by our own dramatists. Of such a foreign play the critic of *The Times* wrote recently: "Further comment on such a story is needless. It is a dramatic eccentricity which carries its own condemnation with it. If it did not conflict with common-sense, it would still offend against the canons of good taste and propriety." But notwithstanding the fact that this play drew forth such a protest, we read that the audience was "a brilliant one, and was graced by the presence of Royalty and the principal members of the aristocracy in London." If a play which "offends against the canons

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of good taste and propriety" is thus patronised, what wonder is it that its evil influence percolates downwards through other channels? I extract from *The Times* of May 29, 1902, this comment on a translation from a play by an eminent French writer. It is surely severe enough to make the most ardent supporter of the drama, who still considers the moral aspect of the question as worth a thought, pause in his usual defence of the stage as "an educative force." This is what the dramatic critic of *The Times*, who is not in the least thin-skinned, wrote: "If the play were of absorbing interest, something might be said about the taste of an author who stirs up the mire of social life—if, indeed, that mire exists elsewhere than in his imagination—in order to make a dramatic 'mud-pie' of it. But any such comment is uncalled for, because the play is, in fact, a dull play, and, therefore, does no one any worse injury than boredom." We never have heard before that so long as an evil thing were dull, it could not injure.

I pass on to a performance by one of the most famous actresses who now visit this country annually from France. And again I quote from *The Times*, lest it should be supposed that the verdict proceeded from a newspaper biassed against the modern stage: "And when you have wallowed in the crapulous, and been dragged through the sordid, and shocked with the frantic, and fooled by the sham-sentimental for five acts, at the end of it all the question occurs—is even Madame Réjane worth it?" Here is a further extract dealing with the same actress's performance, also taken from the columns of *The Times*: "Out of the whole business we retain only one recollection of unalloyed pleasure—the quiet drollery of Madame Daynes-Grassot as Anais, the Madame Cardinal of the piece. Were it not for that, we think *Zaza* would leave in the average spectator little result beyond a vague desire for a Turkish bath." In another part of the same newspaper we read: "The Queen and Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark last night saw the performance of Madame Réjane at the Imperial Theatre." We are loth to believe that the actual character of this performance was known beforehand to the *entourage* of the Queen who recommend plays as likely to give pleasure to Her Majesty. But does not this incident show how absolutely unsatisfactory the

state of the theatre is when the Queen and some of the highest in the land go, wittingly or ignorantly, to witness a play which is so repulsive that it engenders "a vague desire for a Turkish bath"?

In an article written by Mrs. Aria last July in the *Nineteenth Century*, that defender of the stage says: "There is no need to press the point to the Utopian theory of a well-known critic—that, after seeing a good play of domestic sentiment and high intention, we leave the theatre 'wiser, better, purer.'" But this is exactly what so many good people claim for their visits to the theatre. Again and again one is told by those Christian people, who possibly are possessed of a restless conscience, that a "good laugh does every one good," and that there can be "no harm" in an occasional evening at the theatre. First of all, we would gladly agree to the benefit of a good laugh, but it must be a laugh founded on an innocent and pure situation or remark. How many of the laughs raised nightly in our theatres are caused by doubtful and suggestive situations and sayings? How many are raised at the expense of ministers of religion and the conventional laws of marriage? How many are caused by an "amusing" facility in lying and deception? There is not the slightest reason why, in the familiar phrase, the devil should have all the good tunes; but do let us clear our mind of cant, and face the facts as to whether the average theatre and the most popular plays provide the wholesome humour and the healthy amusement which people claiming to be followers of Christ ought to seek. Mrs. Aria went on to say: "Some deadheads, however, are specially valuable, and amongst these may be counted the servants of the Church." That refers to the support which is given to the modern theatre by ministers of religion. "Deadheads" is the professional term used by theatrical folks for those who attend the theatre with free tickets. Hardly anything, except the suggestion that the play is nasty, does a play such a good turn as for it to be the theme of a sermon. The clergy have again and again assisted a play into popularity, by taking it as a theme of a discourse, speaking on "the good lesson" it teaches of virtue triumphant over vice. They soothe the consciences of those members of their congregation who have always wanted to go to plays, but have been held back by scruples, and they incur a tremendous



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responsibility by sending for the first time to the theatre young people who may receive no immediate injury, but who are led gradually into indiscriminate patronage of the stage. How many cases are known to the writer of young men who have begun by going "to see a good play by Shakespeare at the Lyceum," who have within a very short period become fascinated by the lowest variety of drama, and ceased altogether to discriminate between "good" and "bad" plays or playhouses. There never was a more fallacious argument, and certainly never a more popular one, than this notion of discriminating.

When John Wesley was at college, his mother wrote these wise counsels to him, and we would pass them on to all young people who are in perplexity as to their recreations: "Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of a pleasure, take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; whatever increases the authority of your body over your mind, that thing to you is sin." One aspect of the argument as to discrimination is usually overlooked—the paucity of good healthy plays and the immense proportion of what one must in all honesty characterise as unhealthy plays. Take the average town, and ask how frequently in the year is a Shakespearian play performed compared to some musical comedy of the nature described in another part of this article. Our most experienced critics will have difficulty in drawing up a *long* list of innocuous plays. Granted that they can specify a few which, in their opinion, can do no one any harm, I still ask whether the argument of discrimination is a safe one to urge upon Christian people who are told to "abstain from all appearance of evil." We should not think it a wise or humane thing to send a person into a room containing one hundred unlabelled bottles, saying at the same time that five of them would do him good to drink, but the other ninety-five contained poison. Yet that represents, almost too fairly, the proportion of wholesome to unwholesome stage performances. I do not say there are only five good plays to every ninety-five unhealthy ones; but I do assert, after a careful study of the question, that the ratio of performances of absolutely innocuous

plays is as five is to ninety-five. But, says one of my readers, supposing the bottles were labelled, the risk of being poisoned would vanish. I reply, "How is it possible to 'label' our plays in such a way that no harmful play should be witnessed by those who detest such things?" You may answer that the critics tell the public what the plays are like. Yes, but their only chance is when writing in hot haste late at night, after the first production of the play. Even supposing the critic has the courage (as some critics, whom I have quoted, have had) to protest, how many of the casual playgoers who resort to that theatre during the next six months have taken the trouble to read the protest and act upon it? And how many dramatic critics are there who will write such a protest?

The fact is, although some Christian people are slow to grasp it, the promoters of theatres and the writers of plays are not philanthropists desirous of doing good. They want and intend to make money, and that result depends upon the large audiences which they can attract to their theatres. The great majority of those who attend plays with any regularity are not the people who are anxious to be uplifted to a higher moral plane—they are honest enough to make no such claim; they are not the people who want every action of their life to be such as to win the commendation and blessing of God. On them rests, in consequence, not half the responsibility which devolves upon any follower of Christ who goes to the theatre. He has to consider the far-reaching consequences of example, the immediate influence upon his own spiritual nature, the toleration which his presence involves of all that is done and uttered on the stage. He knows that for centuries since the Christian Church was founded the question of the theatre has been a subject of dispute, and that is in itself suspicious. There have always been men who have desired to serve Christ at the smallest possible cost, just as there have been those who would betray Him for ten pieces of silver. But surely after understanding the dissolute and disgraceful state of the stage in this country at the present day, Christian men and women will realise that the question has passed beyond the realm of discussion and entered the Court of Conscience, where their verdict can be no longer doubtful or deferred.

# Things New and Old<sup>1</sup>

AN IRISH STORY

BY SHAN F. BULLOCK

**T**WILIGHT was falling through the autumn evening, when we pushed out the black punt and set forth from Innishluck pier across the lake. Early stars were twinkling in the zenith and shining in the depths beneath. Round all the shores, the woods stood ranked like sentinels of the night, here gaunt and black, there grey and misty; standing ghostly in Curleck and beyond it, dwindling away into nothingness towards the wilds of Goole. The lake was smooth as glass. To look across it was like peering into the prospect of a dream. Nothing moved upon its face; and like sounds from the Beyond came the muffled clank of oars, the hushed mutter of voices, the melancholy toll from Derryvad calling to evening service. *Come — Come — Come — Come,*

said the bell; and silently we sat listening, our oars splashing through the silence, gliding on and on. For us that eventide Henry rang idly in the square tower; and the Minister, standing beyond the dim pews, looked in vain. Just for once in the year we were straying beyond the fold, gliding through the twilight and the creeping mist away towards Clackan and the cottage there in which Daniel was to prove himself before us all.

Daniel? How well we remembered him. How short a time it seemed since the days when he had sat amongst us in the school-house there among the trees. And now he was back from college; and every one was proud of him; and we his old playmates were going to hear him preach



THROUGH THE PARLOUR WINDOW WE HAD SIGHT OF THEMSELVES SITTING AT TEA

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States of America, by Shan F. Bullock.

the Word. It was to be his first sermon in Clackan. For three years we had not seen him. Is it wonder that, for once in the year, Henry rang for us in vain?

The bell ceased. Darkness and the silence deepened. The woods faded out. When at last we came to the wooden bridge and landed below the ferryman's cottage, night and the stars filled the world. Slowly we filed along the path, up through the fields, past hill and hedgerow and little houses dim with smoke and candlelight; struck into a winding road, turned down a rutted lane, then passed through a gateway and joined the groups of men and women that waited by the door of Fraser's cottage.

"Good-evenin' all," said we.

"An' the same to you," came back loud and heartily.

"Nothin' movin' yet?" we asked, in our casual way.

"Naw. Faith, not a thing. Themselves are here; but they're inside with the family."

Through the parlour window we had sight of Themselves sitting at tea, the Preacher facing us, Daniel on his right, the family completing the circle about the lamp. Distinctly we heard the clink of spoon and cup; and the sound of voices came to us.

"Now just one more cup, sir. . . . Ah, just one. . . . Sure, you've had nothin' at all. . . . An' you, Mr. Daniel, why it's woeful to see ye. . . . James, what are ye doin'? Arrah, look at Mr. Daniel's plate. Mary, where's your manners, miss, an' can't ye attend to Mr. Daniel? . . . Now just one last cup, Mr. Daniel——"

"No more, I thank you, ma'am,"—how we strained to catch the well-remembered voice—"I'm largely helped."

"Ah, don't say that."

Daniel's hand went up. "No more, I thank you," said he firmly; and a hush coming we turned from the window.

"Just the same," said we; "just the very same."

"Why, to be sure," said the groups. "An' why not? What's three years in the life of man? But wait till ye hear him—ah, wait till ye hear him!" And patiently, in soft discourse beneath the stars, we waited.

We talked of poor mundane things, of crops and politics, half an eye and half an ear always towards the parlour. There was

laughter sometimes, tittering now and then in dark places near the orchard. At intervals some one stumbled down the path between the apple-trees, or one came hurrying up from the lake with his coat on his arm; and Good-nights fell in showers. Through the hubbub of voices sometimes a match would crackle and flash; and the groups would jump out of the darkness, and you would have sudden glimpse of bearded faces, and straw bonnets, and shawls, and clouds of tobacco-smoke rising towards the stars. The air reeked; talk rose and clashed; quick and quicker people gathered in till hardly might one move an elbow in the throng.

Presently a stir came from the parlour; and with that we fell silent and turned eyes full upon the window. We saw Themselves pass out, and the Family spring into sudden hurry of clearance, cups clattering, chairs and forms dumping upon the boards. The lamp was moved to the mantelpiece; candles were lighted in sconces upon the walls; the table was moved near the windows and books placed upon it: soon the door opened and one by one we passed in through the tiled hall and took our places in the long low-ceiled room, our backs to the china cupboard and the wall-bed with its blue and white curtains, our faces to the window and the table standing between two hair-cloth chairs. It was warm there and rank with peat smoke, mustiness, the odour of musk and of lough-side garments. We sat packed like apples in a creel, not a straw's width between shoulder and shoulder; hats and bonnets upon the floor, hymn-books lying on our knees. And we whispered together, or sat looking at the samplers and yellow engravings in walnut frames that hung between the sconces.

We made a goodly company. From far and near people had gathered to do Daniel honour. Clackan filled half the room. Gorteen gave its best and wisest—Samuel Mires, and Ned Noble, and Jane Hynes with Martin her husband, among them. One or two had crossed from Emo, a few tramped in from far Drumhill. Here sat Henry Marvin in a corner, there James Hoey of Ardhill by the door. In the second row from the table sat Mary, Daniel's sweetheart, her father on this side, her mother on that. Everywhere one saw familiar faces, stern and rugged, beaten with wind and rain—faces that in the morning had looked up at the Minister from the pews in Derryvad, and now were turned

## Things New and Old

upon the door watching for sight of Daniel. What if instead of Daniel, one wondered, they had seen the Minister come in and sit by the table? Would they have welcomed him? Would he, coming suddenly, have seen something in them, a softness, a cheerful repose, which to him was strange? Maybe so. Maybe so.

Hush! The door opened and a little procession came in; the Preacher first, Daniel next, the Family following after one by one to their places on the first form. The Preacher passed round the table, seated himself on the furthest chair and opened his hymn-book; by the other chair Daniel paused, parted his coat-tails, then smiling at Mary, sank down, crossed his knees and surveyed the company.

From face to face his eyes passed, sliding calmly by; and him our eyes devoured. On closer view we found him much changed. His long brown hair, sleek and parted in the centre, was higher on his wide forehead. His face looked paler, so that the freckles stood out upon it; and thinner, so that his nose seemed longer and nearer his heavy chin. He had grown lean and angular; his white hands had lost all trace of spade and plough; his eyes were pensive now, his lips met tight, and as he rose with us to join in the opening hymn we saw that his shoulders drooped.

It was the Old Hundredth; and we sang it lustily, so that the room shook and our voices clashed together, striving to escape. Slowly we took it, this one a little too quick, that dragging behind, Miss Hicks of Clackan leading, the Preacher keeping time with his book; but what we lacked in harmony we gained in heartiness. What, one wondered, would the Minister hearing us have thought, he whose life marched to music; and what, one wondered again, would he have thought had he knelt amongst us whilst the Preacher stood by the table, eyes closed and hands folded, pouring himself out in prayer? Long and fervently he prayed, as to God standing in our midst, appealing, pleading, commending all mankind with us his brothers to the mercy and love of the Father; and we, bowed low before him, our faces in our hands, joined with him in supplication, crying aloud and groaning, sighing our frequent *Amens*. Never did we join like that in any prayer given by the Minister; we could not if we would, perhaps would not if we could. Yet the Minister's prayers were most beautiful,

and he was a righteous man; nor must it be charged against him that his words too often left us cold.

There followed another hymn; then a chapter from Isaiah, read well and feelingly; then a third hymn, and a shorter and more personal prayer in which God was asked to bless the preaching of His Word: then a minute of bustle, followed by a dead hush as Daniel rose.

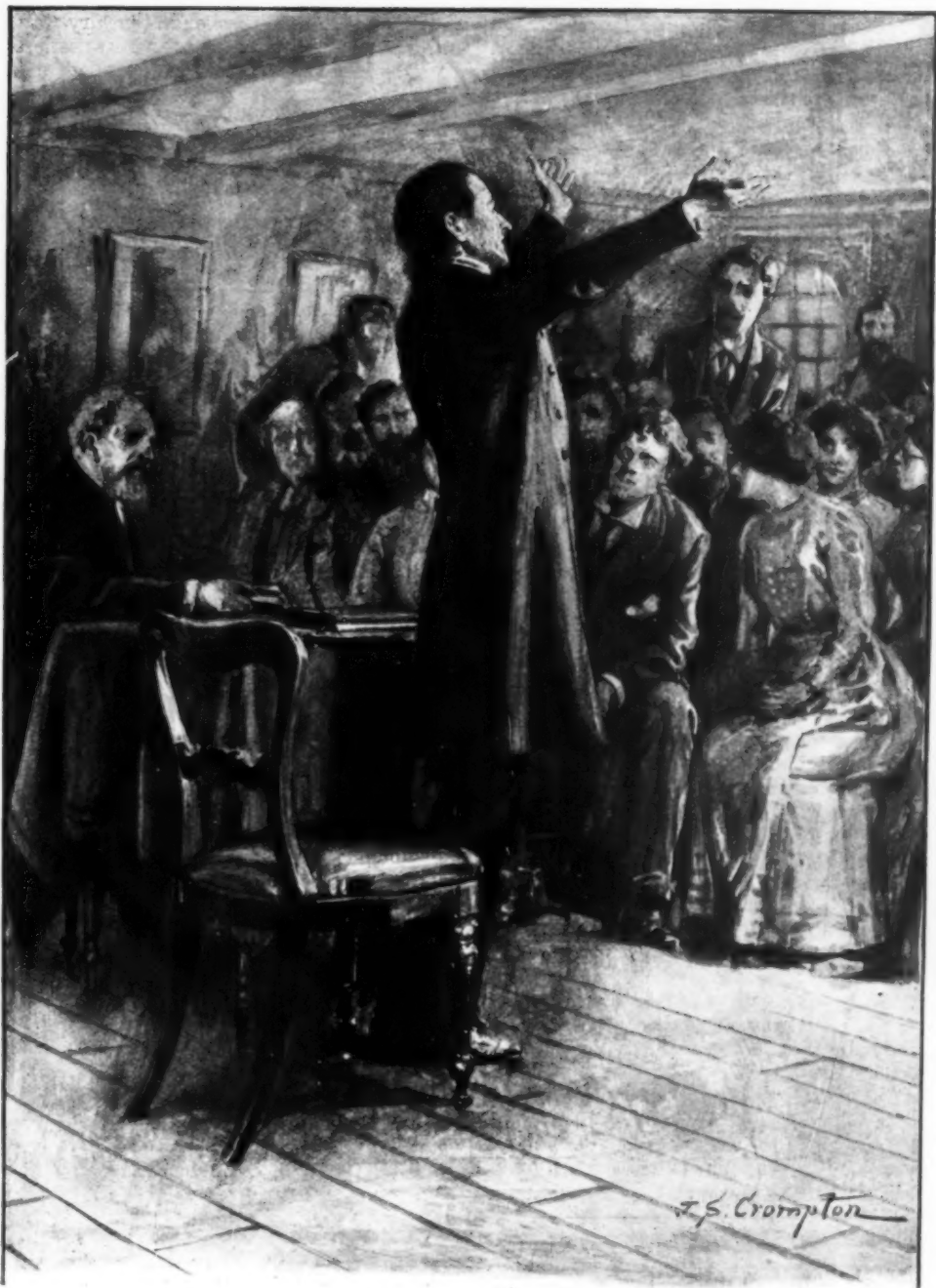
His face was flushed, his lips trembled a little; slowly he read a text: "*Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new:*" repeated it as if to Mary and himself, then closed his Bible, laid it on the table, and began.

He opened confidently, with the surety of youth and the fluency of one well prepared. There was no halting; in a breath he was white hot, brimming with words. They came like a torrent pouring down a mountain; so quick that one might hardly follow them, so insistent that one almost felt them whirl. I sat amazed,whelmed (you have seen willows bent towards a stream, or a weed bowed towards the sun); and already Daniel was deep, and frowns had gathered on the brows of many, when of a sudden the glamour went and I had plain seeing.

What Daniel said I have long forgotten (though men in Clackan will repeat much of it to you, even to-day); but given the text and the occasion and you may easily guess the fashion of his discourse. It was just what you might expect of an ambitious youth, gifted and not without education, come fresh from the pastures of culture to shed light upon the darkness of his native hills. Three years ago Daniel had left us, filled with those old things: now, having browsed happily, was come back shining with new things. Clackan was a dear place, its people worthy; but time had moved on leaving it bound in ignorance. Such changes had come upon the world; such wonders been revealed of late in the domains of knowledge. There was this wonderful theory of evolution. There were these extraordinary discoveries in science. There were these marvellous doings of the higher criticism. There was this new spirit of the age moving across the face of the waters. Back there lay those old dead things; here amongst us were these wonderful new things, quick, imperative, claiming fullest consideration of all Christian men.

To the consideration of these, therefore, Daniel passed; and before him we ignorant





"I APPEAL TO YOU ALL FOR JUSTICE"

## Things New and Old

lough-siders sat dumb, our faces set and hard. Boldly he trampled on our ignorance, boldly would lead us into light. All his learning and reading he drew upon, striving to give us true knowledge. We were narrow, prejudiced, intolerant; behold this new spirit of the age which should make us free. All men were brothers. One Christian soul was as good as another. Our ideas of religion were antiquated. Our conception of God was childish. We had vain notions of Heaven and Hell; we read our Bible ignorantly; we had never grasped the real spirit of Christ's message to the world. Oh, these wonderful new things, cried Daniel, his arms outstretched, his voice ringing among us; this wonderful new revelation of God to men which these latter days had found! Let him tell of this new revelation, said Daniel; then mopping his brow, whirled on.

Like stones we sat hearing and wondering, some with knitted brows, some with scornful eyes or faces bent towards the floor; a few, maybe, pitying Daniel because they understood. He quoted the poets and philosophers; then for the first time did we hear the names of Hegel and Kant, Darwin, Martineau, Arnold, then come first in touch with the tendencies and results of modern religious teaching, then first, maybe, a few among us had our eyes turned seriously upon higher things. It all seemed strange enough then; now it is not strange. Had Daniel stood in some city pulpit, doubtless everything he said would have won approval; but he was preaching in a hill-side parlour, to an ignorant little company, and he did foolishly, and we misunderstood him, and set our faces against him in pitying scorn. This our Daniel? This the man we had trusted and loved? This the result of education and knowledge? Ah, the shame, thought we; and Daniel, reading our thoughts maybe, closed with a rush and sat down.

A stir passed through us, like the going of wind among ripe wheat; then sprang into commotion at sound of one rising behind us in a far corner. With one accord we swung round, and saw Henry Marvin himself—he the shining light of wisest Gorteen—standing by the china cupboard, one hand behind him, the other hooked by a thumb in an armhole of his waistcoat, and on his face that look which triflers had learnt to dread.

"You'll excuse me for a minute, sir,"

said Henry to the Preacher in that dry way of his; "but I'm anxious to put a question or two before we go." His eyes left the Preacher and turned upon Daniel. "You've been sayin' somethin' about Hell," said Henry, his voice hard as an east wind. "Am I right in understandin' ye to believe there's still such a place?"

Ha! Round went we, eager to have sight of Daniel. He was still flushed. The Preacher was whispering to him. He shook his head and rose quickly. "Certainly," he answered.

"I know. But like everything else it's changed of late, you'd be thinkin'? We'd be foolish, you'd say," drawled Henry, "to call it a pit any longer filled wi' fire an' brimstone?"

"Call it that if you wish," answered Daniel. "I think of it as something quite different."

"Just so. Well, it's your word against the Scriptures: but sure, if *you're* right, dyin' may come easier." At this something like a laugh ran among us; but implacably Henry went on. "Then there's this new Heaven," said he. "Tell me, have ye ever read the book of *Revelations*?"

"*Revelations* is——"

"Answer me," said Henry.

"Certainly I have."

"An' you think it foolishness?" suggested Henry.

"I think it wonderful," answered Daniel. "But like much else in the Bible it has been misunderstood. Men have read into it what is not there."

"Ah, yes: that's because we're poor ignorant folk, only able to take God's Word for what we believe." Henry's eyes narrowed. "Then you'd disbelieve the Bible?" said he point blank.

"I believe it with all my heart," cried Daniel. "I protest—I protest . . ."

"You mean the new Bible?"

"I mean the Bible as it is—as God meant us to believe it. It's wonderful; and never so wonderful as when read aright. I want you to understand," said Daniel to us all, "that in no way——"

"Keep to me," Henry broke in. "Isn't every word of the Bible God's own truth?"

"Modern research has shown——"

"Answer me," demanded Henry.

"I refuse to answer," cried Daniel, seeing at last where Henry would lead him; "I refuse to be placed wilfully in a false position." He spread his arms. "I appeal to



you all for justice. Have I said one word to you——?"

"No; but you've said ten thousand words," said Henry, raising his voice; "an' if you're not ashamed of them, then I'm here tellin' ye that I am. Ye refuse to answer? Ay; because ye dare not. Ye protest? Yes; an' so do I. Fifty years I've lived an' never before have I heard a minister of God make light of God's Word. For centuries an' centuries the men an' women before us have called God their Father, have died an' gone happy to meet Him. All our lives we ourselves have ordered our ways accordin' to God's commandments, an' we've brought up our children to obey them, an' we've been content to believe that when our call comes the reward will be sure. We've trusted in God. He was our rock an' our sure defence. His Word was our guide an' full comfort. An' now it's come to us to have to sit an' listen to a man we trusted tellin' us that the Bible was wrong, an' our religion was wrong, an' our trust in God the Father was wrong, an' all the old things were wrong. Yes, it's come to that—it's come to that," said Henry, his head wagging slowly and a slow light of mockery upon his face. "This is

what education does in these days. This is the new kind of heresy and Popery that's abroad these times . . ."

Then Daniel flung out his arms in piteous appeal. "I protest. I protest," he cried. "Oh, this is terrible."

"Man, the terrible thing is that I've had to sit listenin' to ye," answered Henry. "No, sir," he said to the Preacher, who had risen, "no disrespect to you, but nothin' more is needed 'cept to go our ways. An' may God forgive us if we've sinned this night."

Then Henry took his hat and went out; and one by one we followed him, leaving Daniel standing mute by the table with Mary his sweetheart holding him by the hand.

I am glad that Mary stood by Daniel. I have often thought that we treated him harshly. Still, in those days—and later, it may be—the old plain things were quite sufficient for our simple needs, and teachers of new things we held in scorn. And surely there was truth in what the Preacher said to Daniel that night when we all had gone: "Young man, you have begun climbing the hill at the top. Go down to the very bottom and begin again."

## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris, with other Characters in *Adam Bede*

BY WILLIAM MOTTRAM (A GRAND-NEPHEW OF THE BEDES)

### II.—Adam Bede a Fiction founded on Fact—the Sources from which the Facts were derived

"Long, long be my heart with such memories filled!  
Like the vase in which roses have once been  
distilled:  
You may break, you may shatter the vase if you  
will,  
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."  
MOORE.

IN the preceding chapter I have named the family from whose living circle several of the prominent characters in *Adam Bede* were taken by its author. I have also indicated the part of the country where they spent their life—as to the parents, to life's close, and as to the sons till they were full-grown men. I propose now to show how the story of *Adam Bede*

adapts itself to the geography of this locality, how it agrees also with its dialect and fits in with the social conditions there at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, which are the times dealt with in the story of *Adam Bede*. I will, however, first forewarn the reader, that he must not expect to find in this work of fiction exact biography, correct history, accurate geography, or even full dialect. These things are not promised to us, and we have no right to expect them, since it was no part of the author's purpose to furnish them. Her aim was entirely different. Therefore, in judging of her work, it is important to bear in mind the old maxim—

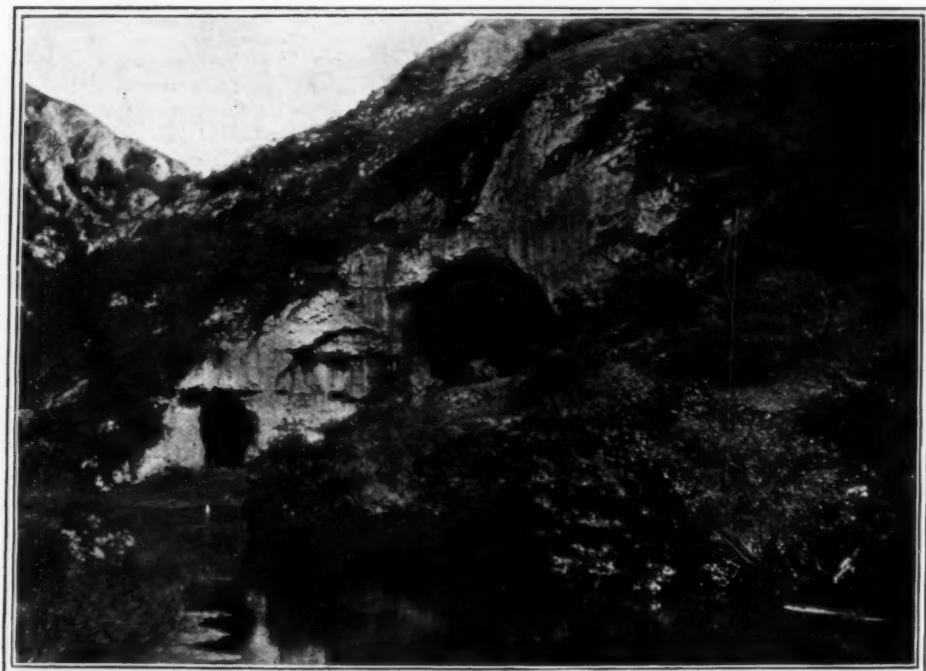
## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

"In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend."

Many of George Eliot's statements in fiction have been seized upon by a certain class of writers and asserted as facts of real life, when, in reality, they were nothing of the kind. Thus, with the best intentions, fact and fiction have been so blended as to produce misleading and erroneous impressions. When reading a work of fiction we have, perhaps, no inherent right to inquire concerning the originals whom the author had in mind when constructing his plot and working out his details. Why not take your book as you find it, a work of literary craftsmanship, and so enjoy it and accept its lessons without troubling yourself as to the author's originals? That is his secret—not yours. This, I am sure, would be the feeling of many writers of fiction, and among them George Eliot. Indeed, it is not difficult to discover a tinge of irritation in respect of the earlier attempts to identify her characters. And yet, in spite of ourselves, the question will force itself upon us while reading fiction, How much of this is real? and how much is the product of pure

imagination? In the case of *Adam Bede*, there were weighty reasons why its author should deprecate attempts at identification. Among others, there was this, that similar attempts with regard to *Scenes from Clerical Life* had occasioned considerable annoyance. There were other reasons it is not necessary to name. There is, however, no need of reticence now, and in the course of years the authoress herself allowed several acknowledgments to be wrung from her which help us to a just conclusion.

The geography, the characters and dialect of *Adam Bede* are in the main taken from Derbyshire and Staffordshire, but for all that Warwickshire has in all these respects crept into the story, as might have been anticipated. It should be remembered, in passing, that in writing her novel George Eliot did not consider herself bound to exact description. When Holman Hunt had conceived the idea of his great painting, the *Shadow of Death*, he is said to have resided in Nazareth for four years, at great sacrifice to himself, in order that all the settings of his picture might be accurate in detail and true to locality. Even our



DOVEHOLES, DOVEDALE

The Illustrations are from Photographs by Allan P. Mottram

## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

author, when preparing to write her historical novel, *Romola*, portraying the country and the times of the great monk Savonarola, found it necessary to reside for a while in Florence and to make large use, at great cost to herself of time and labour, as well as money, of its architecture, its paintings, its libraries and antiquities, to enable her accurately to construct her entrancing story. Even then, her success was not so complete as her critics could have desired.

In writing *Adam Bede* the case was different. All the materials came from sources much nearer home. Her father's oft-repeated tale of his early life, together with the absorbing and captivating recitals of a beloved aunt, formed the ground-work of the book; while such geographical description as was required was already familiar to her eye by several visits to the undoubted scene of the story. These visits commenced when the author was only seven years of age, and they continued till she was a full-grown woman.

In *Adam Bede* we have frequent mention of the county town of Stoniton. The book itself supplies the evidence as to what county town is meant by this reference. In Chapter XXII. we have related to us the gathering of the birthday party to celebrate the coming of age of Arthur



TISSINGTON SPIRES, DOVEDALE

Donnithorne, the young squire, and Martin Poyser, the senior, is made to say—"I remember Jacob Taft walking fifty miles after the Scotch raybels, when they turned back from Stoniton." One need hardly remark that the rebellion here alluded to is none other than that of 1745, led by the Young Pretender; or that it was from the town of Derby that the "raybels" began their inglorious retreat. Stoniton is thus identified to a certainty.

There is another veiled reference to Derby. In Chapter XLIII. we read: "The

## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

place fitted up that day as a court of justice was a grand old hall now destroyed by fire." It suffices to say that the town hall of Derby was so destroyed in 1841. Nottingham was the place where the prototype of Hetty Sorrel was tried and condemned. Our author fixes the venue in Derby.

We have another sign of locality in the questions and answers which passed between Adam and Hetty, concerning Eagledale, Chapter XX. Hetty is longing to know more about the place whither her secret lover, Arthur Donnithorne, has gone fishing. "Have you ever been to Eagledale?" she asks. "Yes," replies Adam, "ten years ago, when I was a lad. It's a wonderful sight, rocks and caves, such as you never saw in your life. I never had a right notion o' rocks till I went there. There's nothing but a bit of an inn where he's gone to fish." To any one knowing these parts there could be no manner of doubt that this description relates to Dovedale and to the Izaak Walton Hotel, which stands on an elevation near the Ilam end of the dale. The inn of Adam Bede's time was simply a farm-house with a licence attached to it; it has now swollen into a comfortable hotel, dear to the hearts of anglers.

Another distinctive geographical feature is the Binton Hills, described in Chapter II.: "High up against the horizon were the huge, conical masses of hill, like giant mounds, intended to fortify this region of corn and grass against the keen and hungry winds of the north." Here is an apt description of the Weaver Hills, occupying the northern side of the parish of Ellastone. Another may be quoted from a minor poet—

"See how majestic Weaver's brow  
Swell from each broken scene below,  
O'er the wide vales he bends sublime,  
And triumphs in his polar clime."

The Royal Engineers in making the Ordnance Surveys have found Weaver an admirable station, one thousand two hundred feet high, and commanding a magnificent prospect on every side. It was on the highest mound of Weaver that Mr. A. L. Wragge began those meteorological observations which he has continued at the charges of the Government on the top of Ben Nevis. Weaver is an imposing feature of the district, conspicuous for many miles around.

In *Adam Bede* we have mention made of Oakbourne and the Buxton coach. Take out the prefix "Oak" and substitute "Ash,"

and you have the name of the town of Ashbourne, well known to Adam Bede as well as to George Eliot. The coaches between the two towns would be a reality in the days when the daughter was driven over the district by her father in his gig, and, doubtless, she saw them with her own eyes. The agreement of geographical names is at least suggestive, as between Norbury and Norburne, Ellastone and Treddlestone, Rocester and Rosseter, Ashbourne and Oakbourne, Warslow and Warson, Roston and Broxton. Here is, at least, a marked coincidence of sound, while it must be acknowledged that in other things the likeness does not hold good.

We have frequent contrasts in *Adam Bede* of two tracts of country which are contiguous to each other. We read of "that grim outskirts of Stonyshire," where-with Dinah Morris stands associated; "a bleak, treeless region, intersected by lines of cold, grey stone." This is contrasted with "that rich undulating district of Loamshire," where Mrs. Poyser had her home. Mrs. Poyser, speaking of this grim outskirts, suggests that the inhabitants thereof "live on the naked hills like poultry a-scratching on a gravel bank." All this has its counterpart in the country where Adam Bede spent his early life, and over which he drove his wonderful daughter more than once. The high, bleak country may be said to lie between Ashbourne and Wirksworth, and its lofty hills are plainly visible from the top of Weaver, or from the gentle height on which Norbury church stands.

I will only mention one other geographical identification. To a native who has travelled it is most conclusive. In Chapter III. Seth is walking with Dinah, and is earnestly pressing upon her his matrimonial suit. "They had reached one of those very narrow passes between two tall stones which performed the office of a stile in Loamshire." I can well understand how a person brought up amidst rural surroundings in Warwickshire would wonder at the construction of a Staffordshire stile. The description is as precise as language can make it. And yet, in spite of our several identifications, which, in themselves, are unmistakable, I am fully persuaded that some stray bits of Warwickshire scenery have stolen into the narrative.

The dialect of Adam Bede tells a similar tale. It is not the dialect of Warwickshire, though words and phrases which are provincialisms there have been imported



## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

into it; it is intended to be, and in the main is, representative of the common speech which prevailed in the district where Adam Bede's early days were spent. Dialect is a most difficult matter with any author, and we happen to know that George Eliot set much store by that of Adam Bede. When Lord Lytton pointed out to her what he considered two defects in the book—the dialect and Adam's marriage with Dinah, she said to her friends, "I would rather have my teeth drawn than part with either." She took special pains in her dealings with her publishers to have the provincialisms of her book correctly presented.

It so happens that the Staffordshire dialect was familiar to me from infancy. My first residence away from the county was in Warwickshire, where I became familiar with the provincialisms of that county also. This entitles me to say, that as in the geography, so in the dialect, a mixture from Warwickshire has crept in. In this matter we are helped by

a suggestion from Miss Blind. She informs her readers in her book on *George Eliot*, that in the family of Adam Bede at Griff, "a broad, provincial dialect was spoken." I have no doubt this is true, and that the dialect was not only broad, but mixed also. The dialect of the book likewise, as of the home, is a mixture. This I could conclusively prove did space allow.

Local allusions are traceable in other particulars. The ordinary breakfast, we learn, in the home at Hayslope was a first course of oatmeal porridge, and a second of toasted oatcake served hot. I can quite believe this, only I am of opinion that good wholesome milk would be served with the

porridge, fresh butter or home-made lard would be spread on the oatcake, or a dish of toasted cheese set beside it. The oatmeal would be grown in the parish and ground at Norbury mill. Fresh meat and wheaten bread, we are told, were delicacies to the people of Hayslope in the times of Adam Bede. Wheat was but little grown north of the Trent, and to purchase it was a privilege reserved to the well-to-do, since its cost was often four times as much as it is in these later days. The diet might be monotonous, but it had in it the elements of vitality and force, and there was reared

on it a race of strong and vigorous men, of which Adam and Seth Bede were fine examples. The physical force of the men of Derbyshire has passed into an ancient proverb—

"Derbyshire  
born, Derby-  
shire bred,  
Strong in the  
arms, weak in  
the head."

About the latter characteristic I will say nothing, but any one visiting the charming county will

find it peopled by a race of sturdy, Saxon folk.

The parish wakes would loom large in the thoughts of the people of Norbury and Ellastone, and these festivities are several times alluded to in *Adam Bede*. Originally established as religious commemorations, they had degenerated into scenes of irreligious riot. Here our identifications must cease. If others were needed the book would supply them in great abundance. Let us, however, complete our statement by turning to the account our author has given of the origin of her book, in several scattered references. And, first of all, we are not surprised to discover that



A STAFFORDSHIRE STILE



## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

George Eliot's earliest attempt at fiction was descriptive of a Staffordshire village, although it never got beyond its first chapter and was never published. We also learn that somewhat late in life she made this acknowledgment concerning *Adam Bede*: "There are things in it about my father, *i.e.* being interpreted, things my father told us concerning his early life." This it was that possessed the mind of the father in his old age, and we learn that, in the eight years of his comparative retirement, when his beloved daughter was his devoted house-

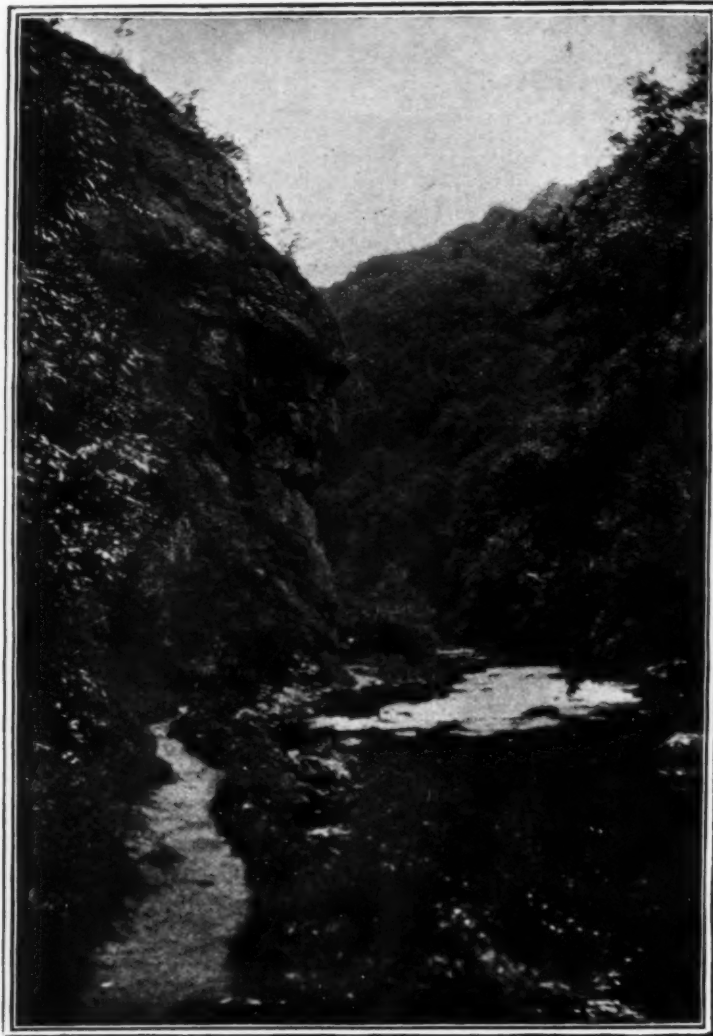
keeper and daily companion, his conversations with her often ran back to the past, which was quite natural—

"When time, that steals our years away,  
Shall steal our pleasures too,  
The memory of the past will stay,  
And half our joys renew."

These happy conversations, however, form only one portion of the primal suggestions from which *Adam Bede* sprang. Its author says: "The germ of *Adam Bede* was an anecdote told me by my Methodist aunt

Samuel." "The incident lay on my mind for years, till time had made my mind a nidus in which it could fructify." "The character of Dinah grew out of my recollections of my aunt." "I was very fond of her. She was loving and kind to me, and I could talk to her of my inward life, which was closely shut up from those usually round me."

These extracts introduce the relative who, after her own immediate friends at home, filled the largest space in the warm affections of George Eliot in the earlier years of her life. In 1839, she writes to this beloved aunt (Dinah Morris), in prospect of a visit to her in Wirksworth, which afterwards took place: "I have a faint hope that the pleasure and profit I have felt in your society may be repeated in the summer; there is no place I would



LION'S HEAD ROCK, DOVEDALE

## The True Story of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris

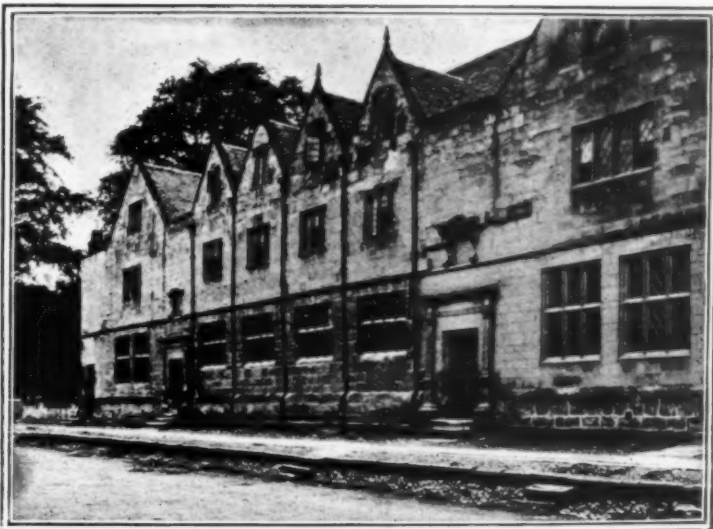
sooner visit than Wirksworth, or the inhabitants of which have a stronger hold on my affections." This was not her only visit. Even as a child of seven she had been driven by her father over the whole region covered by the fiction, and this experience was repeated later on. The bleak hills were familiar to her own eyes. Ellastone and Ashbourne were well known to her. She mentions her visit to the fine parish church at the latter place, tells us of the wonders of Alton Towers, of Lichfield, its cathedral and monuments; of Uttoxeter, and other places. Neither the father nor his daughter could have the faintest notion of the use that George Eliot would one day make of the material she gathered in so natural and simple a way from her father and her aunt.

One other visit to the aunt has been described to me by four persons who met her on that occasion. It was a more leisurely visit than those she had made in company with her father. This time she stayed with her cousin Samuel Evans the younger, who was a draper and velvet manufacturer in Wirksworth. Her aunt and herself spent much time together. She occupied some hours in writing down her aunt's experiences from her own lips, and was hardly ever seen in Wirksworth without a note-book and pencil in her hand.

I know that doubt has been thrown on the note-book account, as being unlike the author, but a recent writer who knew her well during her earlier life in London, declares that it was her habit in those days to carry her note-book and pencil with her continually.

I have lingered on these details because we thus see George Eliot, all unconscious of their future use, gathering the materials which, touched by the hand of her genius, were afterwards to be reproduced in such form as to command the admiration of the

world. How many comedies, how many tragedies, how many startling and entertaining dramas are doomed to lie dormant in the history of many a family, because there is no skilled hand to draw forth the latent fire, no literary artist to gather up the fragments and construct the story. To us, how instructive it is in the case of *Adam Bede*, that not only does the aged father, released from the bonds of active toil, fondly dwell on the simple facts of his own early life, in conversation with his beloved daughter—but even the daughter herself, after having acquired fame as a skilled literary artist, cannot refrain from going over that past



ASHBOURNE ELIZABETHAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

again and again; first, in dealing with Mr. Hackitt, then in delineating *Adam Bede*, and finally in portraying Caleb Garth.

Furthermore, many competent critics have affirmed that, in George Eliot's great career, her freest, most useful, and most abiding work is that wherein she has so copiously drawn upon her own experiences and her capacious memory. She was thankful, she said, to have written so true a book as *Adam Bede*. By this one work she has made myriads of readers her life-long debtors, she has conferred a rich blessing on millions of mankind, she has happily distilled for us sweet roses of memory, and we may thankfully say that the fragrance of the precious flowers is round about the book for evermore.

# Servants of the Public

BY GERTRUDE BACON

## II.—The Railway Signalman

*With Original Illustrations from the Author's photographs*



AN ORNAMENTAL SIGNAL-BOX

OF all the faithful servants of the public, who patiently, day by day and year by year, minister to their comfort and security, none occupy a more important or responsible position than does the railway signalman. Alike in the crowded box of the busy London terminus, or in the lonely cabin on the bleak Yorkshire moor, he daily holds the lives of hundreds in his hand, and only by his vigilant and unending care is it brought about that the millions who yearly trust themselves upon the iron network of our British lines reach their destination with safety and ease.

The great system of railway signalling has followed as a natural and inevitable consequence on the increase of railway travelling, and the growth of its complexity and completeness has been ever as the needs of the increasing traffic demanded. In those good old days we still occasionally sigh for, but should be extremely sorry to have back, while yet trains were unknown and the gay coaches clattered along the highways, signals and signalling were undreamed of. The exigencies of the case did not demand such precautions, from which fact, however, the conclusion must

not be drawn—as it once so often was—that travelling by coach was safer than by train. Those old-fashioned people who fifty years ago and even less shook their heads over each fresh disaster on the rail, and said that in their younger days such accidents were impossible, forgot the coaches overturned in the road, the axles that broke, the horses that ran away, the passengers who “caught their deaths” from exposure in winter storms. The traveller from London to Edinburgh or Cornwall at least no longer finds it necessary to make his will or call his relatives around him, as did his forebears, before embarking on a perilous enterprise.

At the very commencement of railway travelling, when trains were few and slow, signals either did not exist or were of a most primitive and make-shift character. When the Liverpool and Manchester rail was first opened there were no signals at all, neither were there on the Stockton and Darlington line. For several years a candle burning in the station window was considered sufficient guide on the Hartlepool branch, its presence indicating that the line was clear, its absence warning the engine-driver to stop. After this a lamp on the top of a post, approached simply by a ladder, was held to answer all needs, and by day a flag run up and down a pole. In 1838 Sir John Hawkshaw set himself seriously to consider the question of railway signals, and as a result produced a series of discs painted red and green and presented flatwise or edgewise to the driver of an approaching train. Nevertheless a year later a historian describing the London and Birmingham Railway relates how “certain policemen are stationed at intervals along the line as signalmen, whose duty it is to remove obstructions, and to warn an approaching train of any obstacle. The signals made use of in the daytime are small white and red flags, and at

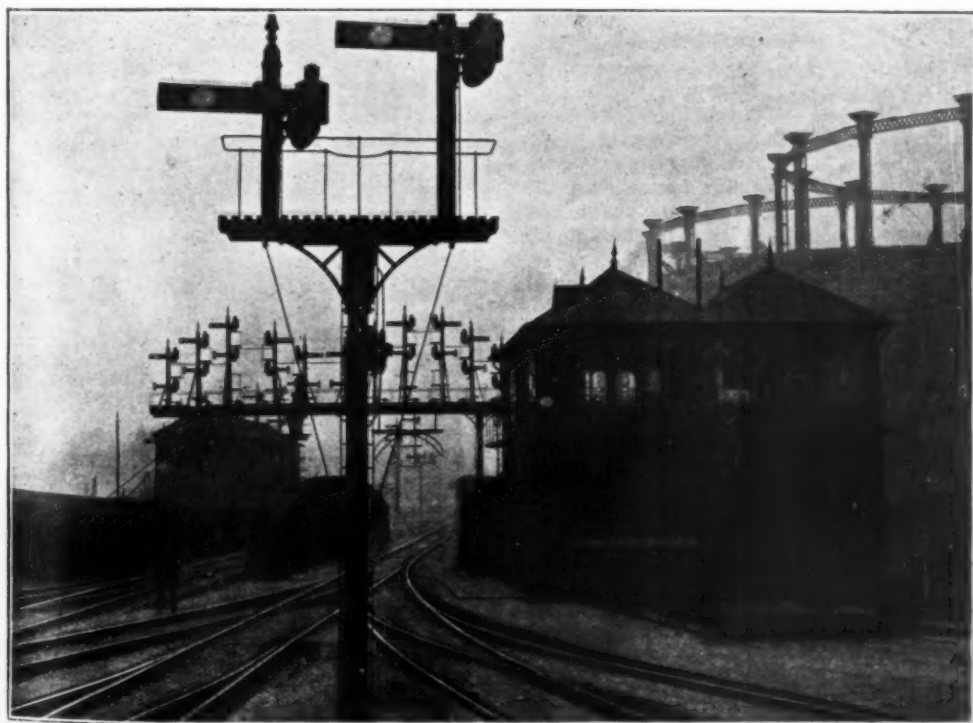
## Servants of the Public

night lanterns with lenses similarly coloured."

The next advance on these primitive methods, as railway travelling became more and more general, was the introduction of semaphores, the arms of which were worked by hand by means of a handle at the foot of the post. One railway servant would have the charge of several of these signals, perhaps at some distance apart, and maybe have to attend to points besides, the result being much hard labour, frequent delay, and every now and again an accident. It is said that the idea of working semaphores from a distance first originated in the contrivance of a lazy, or perhaps overworked Irish porter on the London and North-Western, who, having two signals at some distance apart under his charge, conceived the happy notion of counter-weighting the handle of one and so connecting it with a clothes-line that he could manage to work it from the other. An inspector, seeing the ingenious device and noting its possibilities, took the matter up and enlarged upon it, with a result that signal-cabins and levers

contained therein were presently established throughout all the lines.

From those early days and make-shift methods to the present completeness of the "block" system, wherein every known device for the elimination of the personal element of risk is combined, and the signalman is in all possible ways safeguarded against himself, is a far cry indeed. Many years have elapsed in the interval, and many methods have had trial. Before the introduction of the "block and lock" (as it is familiarly termed), trains were run upon the old and original plan of "marking upon the time intervals." In practice this method imposed a certain period of time between trains following each other on the same line of rail. Five minutes, for example, must be allowed between two goods trains, ten minutes between a goods and a passenger, etc., while for additional safety a provision was made that the driver of a second train following on one which had not passed at least fifteen minutes before, should be carefully informed concerning what was ahead of him.



ST. PANCRAS--A MISTY MORNING



## Servants of the Public



AT READING STATION, G.W.R.

Such a system of course imposed a severe and dangerous strain upon signalmen, drivers, and guards alike. If, by any chance, the train ahead lost time, or came to a stand between stations, her safety depended entirely upon the vigilance of the driver of the train behind, and on the guard of the first train, who had to run back along the line and place detonators upon the metals as warnings. In olden days the "brakesman," as he was then called, was bound, if his train stopped outside a station, to go back a quarter of a mile and there remain till whistled for, when he had to run in as quick as he could for fear of being overtaken by the following engine.

It is the fashion for many people to talk vaguely about the "block" system and the safety it ensures, but comparatively few, it would appear, outside the railway world, could give a clear exposition of its workings. Briefly stated it may be described as a method that ensures that one whole section or "block" of the line shall be clear between each advancing train.

The entire length of our railway lines up and down the country are divided into sections, each section possessing a signal-box at either end. These sections usually extend from one station to the next, and may thus be of any length from a few hundred yards to seven or eight miles; but where stations

are far apart on a busy line intermediate cabins are introduced, to reduce the length of the division and thus allow the trains to run in quicker succession. Each signal-cabin is of course in telegraphic communication with the rest.

When, therefore, a train is about to pass over one of the running-lines—as the technical phrase has it—the signalman who dispatches it first sends a code-bell signal forward asking, "Is line clear?" The signalman at the cabin in advance, who receives the signal, must not reply in the affirmative unless the line is absolutely clear to a certain fixed point

a short distance beyond his cabin, known as the "clearing point," and unless all the points are set in proper position for the train to pass over; nor having given his signal must he allow any obstruction until the train has passed. In due course he will receive intimation that the train has actually started, and it is then his business to inquire in turn of the next cabin ahead if the line is clear, and the cabin ahead will repeat the process already described, and in this way the system is repeated from box to box throughout the train's entire journey.

To understand more clearly the working of this system let us pay a brief



ON THE DOWN LINE, READING



visit, having obtained the necessary permission, to a wayside signal-box, and persuade the signalman to explain to us the details of his duty. For the sake of illustration let us suppose we have chosen the cabin at Thatcham, a small country station on the Newbury, Hungerford and Devizes branch of the Great Western Railway—not an important post, but by reason of its very simplicity the better suited for our purpose. The cabin itself, a trim square structure of the usual type, stands by the line surrounded by a tiny patch of garden gay with flowers, and as we climb to its well-lit upper room we are struck with a certain sense of cheerfulness and homeliness about its plain interior. The long row of levers glow as brightly as much polishing will admit of; there are flower-pots in the broad windows, and a fire burns cosily on the hearth. The whole somehow suggests the living-room of a lighthouse, and indeed the signal-boxes have before now been described as the light-houses of the railways, and the resemblance is yet more complete on the wild winter's nights when the rain dashes in sheets against the glass, and the wind sweeps along the valley with a force that threatens to overthrow the cabin and the solitary watcher within, keeping his midnight vigil. Or again, when a mighty thunderstorm bursts overhead, and the lightning flashes about the levers, and the telegraph instruments ring wildly and spark with loud cracking reports



SIGNALS OUTSIDE DARLINGTON

like things possessed. On occasions like these the lonely signalman's lot, bound at the post he dare not forsake, is not one to be envied.

To-day, however, everything is fair and serene. We gaze out of the west window whence we can overlook almost all the four-mile sweep of rails to Newbury, and see the "distance" signal of the up-line more than half-a-mile away, its arm extended stiffly at "danger." Close at hand is the "home" signal; eastward in the opposite direction, beyond the station, come the "advance," and further out, the "advance starter" semaphores, while the "down" signals are arranged in inverse order on the other side of the rails. Certain of these posts are out of sight, hidden by the curve and the station buildings, nevertheless the signalman need be in no anxiety as to whether their arms have duly risen or fallen in obedience to his levers. On the shelf before him stands an electric instrument the three positions of whose indicator show whether the invisible signals

are "on," "off," or "wrong"; and if, as occasionally happens in very hot weather when the heat has expanded the wires, the semaphore-arms fail to respond to the levers, one glance at the indicator will acquaint him with the fact. Similarly, at night-time, when red and green lamps replace the arms, an electric bell automatically worked immediately sounds the warning if a lamp has become extinguished.

Over the row of bright-painted levers that operate the signals, and the large wheel that works the gates



AT READING. A FOREST OF SIGNALS

## Servants of the Public

of the level crossing just outside, runs a long shelf bearing the telegraphic instruments, their purpose indicated by brass plates underneath. And while we are examining these, suddenly a quick incisive message is rung out upon the harsh-toned bell of the telegraph labelled as belonging to Newbury. This message, as interpreted to us, tells that a "through goods" train on the up-line has just left Kintbury, the station next beyond Newbury, and asks if the line be clear. In reply our signalman first repeats



THATCHAM SIGNAL-BOX, EXTERIOR

the message, beat for beat, to show that he has understood it, and then gives the signal "Line clear," in immediate obedience to which a little white card, bearing the words "Line clear" slips into place in the instrument before him. Then comes a pause, while the approaching goods is covering the distance between Kintbury and Newbury, but immediately this is accomplished and the Newbury signal-box is passed, there follow other beats on the bell, and a new label slips into place—"Train entering section."

At once our signalman steps over to the

other end of the shelf, where stands a duplicate set of instruments labelled "Midgham," the station eastward next ahead. "Through goods approaching, is the line clear?" he beats out in code on the telegraph, and immediately his message is returned to him, and the little card "Line clear" slips up in its place in the Midgham instrument. Then, and not till then, our man turns to his levers. With quick practised movement he pulls off in order first the "advance starter," then the "advance," then the "home," and last the "distance," and we watch the far-off arm fall after a just appreciable interval during which the impulse is travelling towards it.

Now, too, on the curve we see the smoke of the nearing engine, and soon the long train of laden goods-trucks has rattled noisily through the station. Immediately it has passed our friend wires a message—"Clearing back" he calls it—to Newbury to acquaint them with the fact, and then "pegs up" to Midgham, "Train entering section." Then he goes to the levers again, and the semaphore-arms in due rotation flap back to danger. Next in the wide-ruled register known as the "line-clear book," lying open before him on a desk, he enters particulars of the train and its exact time of passing; and by the time he has done this the tinkling message from Midgham shows him that the train has passed that station, and by so doing has gone completely out of his ken.

Supposing, however, for the sake of example, that when our friend intimated to the Midgham cabin the train's approach he got the answer, "Line blocked." In this case he leaves his own signals at danger. The driver of the advancing train notes the "distance" is not off. He does not, however, stop his engine, but merely slackens speed, and crawls slowly up to the "home" signal. If this, too, is at danger he brings his train to a stand, but if by this time the obstruction is removed, and Midgham has signalled back "Line clear" in time for Thatcham to pull off the home signal before the train actually halts, the driver will pursue his way as usual. Every driver looks out for his distance signals most particularly, for if they are "on" they mean that slackened speed and special care are needed, while if they are "off" he may dash past them with a light heart, fairly assuming that the home

## Servants of the Public



THATCHAM SIGNAL-BOX, INTERIOR

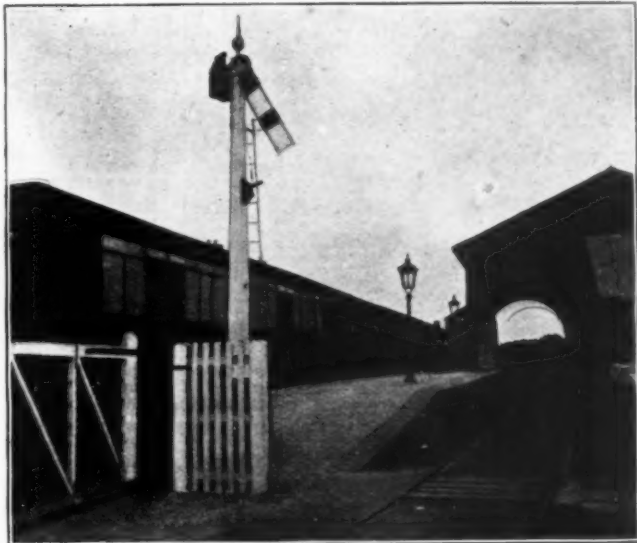
signals will be off also. It is, indeed, by a clever system of interlocking, rendered absolutely impossible for a signalman to pull off his "distance" signals until he has pulled off his home ones also. Similarly by particular mechanism it is equally impossible for a man to lower his signals for a train to pass unless all the points which lead from sidings or other lines are so fixed that no obstruction can find its way where the train is about to pass. This is the "interlocking" or "lock" system, by which the signalman is safeguarded against the consequences of his own possible carelessness or forgetfulness.

Nevertheless the time is not yet, nor probably ever can be, when the weight of grave responsibility can be lifted from the shoulders of the signalman. The best and most careful of us all are liable to error at times; and we may be thankful that in most cases the consequences of our fault are not visited so terribly upon us. One of the saddest stories in all railway history is that of the Thirsk disaster of November 2, 1892, when through the mistake of a signalman the Flying Scotchman

dashed into a goods train between Otteringham and Thirsk, ten passengers being killed and thirty-nine seriously injured. Yet when James Holmes, the erring signalman, was tried for manslaughter at the York Assizes and found guilty, the court-house rang with cheers as the judge dismissed the broken-down, weeping man without punishment. In truth, poor fellow, he had much to urge in extenuation of his fault. That day his child had died, and unnerved at his loss, in deep distress over his wife's grief as well as his own, and utterly worn out after many hours' weary vigil, he had felt himself unequal to

his work and asked to be relieved from duty that night. "Can you send relief to Manor House cabin to-night? Holmes's child is dead," was the telegram sent to the traffic inspector; but the answer received was, "No relief can be sent," and so the wearied man went on duty, only to fall asleep over his work, with the awful results just mentioned.

Set against this another true story of a signal-box, the signals of which were seen to be clear for an up and a down train to pass,



AT THE STATION

## Servants of the Public

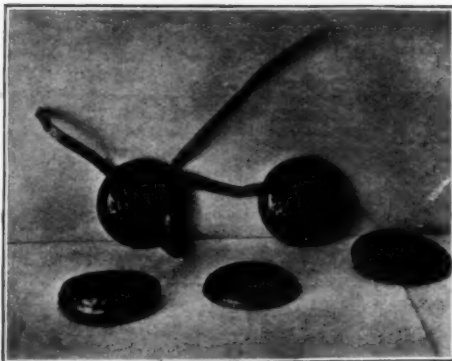
but before the trains had come up they were all standing at danger. The trains were brought to a standstill, but no signalman was to be seen. They went to seek him, and found him lying lifeless on the floor of his cabin. Mortally stricken, he must have felt himself dying, and thinking only of the safety of his trains, pulled his signals to danger with his last strength, and then fallen dead.

No small exertion, by the way, is needed in the pulling over of certain of the levers, especially those which operate the distance signals. One signalman relates how he once found this task strangely augmented, so that his full strength scarce sufficed, when he discovered that they had been haymaking on the railway banks, and allowed the grass to rest on the wires, so that he was really trying to shift about half a ton of grass in addition to his signals.

As we all know, red and green lamps take the place of the extended semaphore-arms at night-time; but what occurs when dense choking fog has settled down upon all the country-side, and not even the brightest light can penetrate its enshrouding mass? The signalman from his box sees the mists ominously and heavily stealing down the valley. Accordingly



WORKING THE POINTS



FOG-SIGNALS

along his telegraph he has flashed the message to the man in authority at the nearest station, "Send fog-signalmen." A messenger is at once dispatched to neighbouring cottages where, in proximity to their work, live certain plate-layers in constant employ upon the line, and in a very short space of time the "fogmen," closely buttoned in their overcoats, for a cold and weary task is before them, have reported themselves at the signal-box and have been dispatched to their respective posts beneath the semaphores, each man carrying with him a lamp and a supply of those detonators the noise of whose explosion is so familiar to dwellers by the rail.

These fog-signals take the form of round tin cases, filled with a fulminating charge, about the size of a large watch, attached to which are narrow slips of flexible metal. Two of these tags are twisted over the rail to hold the detonator in place; the long one is placed along the metal in the direction of the approaching train so that it is first caught by the wheel, and thus prevents the signal being swept off before it has exploded. Two detonators are placed on the rail ahead of a "distance" signal when the signal stands at danger, and are removed if the line is signalled clear. Each fog-signalman, who is allowed to light a fire by the wayside to warm himself, must stay at his post while the fog lasts until relieved, being at intervals inspected by the foreman signalman and refreshed by food and much-appreciated hot coffee.

Of the duties of the signalmen upon single lines where the "staff" or "tablet" system is in vogue, and of their life in the signal-cabins of large stations and great



termini, where a hundred or more levers are under their care in one box, and the view from their windows reveals a network of points and a forest of semaphores, we have no space to speak. Neither can we refer further to the pointsmen and their work, and the many stories of the perils men have run when, as sometimes happens, they have been caught by

the foot in the points and have been so held captive in front of an advancing train. The great system of railway signalling has indeed only been touched on in the most superficial manner; but perhaps enough has been said to give some slight idea of the onerous, all-responsible, self-sacrificing labour of a great army of the servants of the public.

## Changing Fortunes

BY JAMES BONWICK, F.R.G.S.

ONCE steaming through the fair Isles of Greece, my thoughts reverted to Levantine Changes of Fortune.

I had come from the green old Nile, whose waters still laved the limestone shore on which the Pyramids were guarding the sacred realm of Sunset and Tombs. How far distant the time when the wise and mighty Pharaohs had their busy colonies among the rich mines of Mount Sinai! I left the country bordering the Great Sea, where Solomon had reigned in all his glory, and where afterwards the blessed Son of Man had walked in Love; but still, where long, long before, the palæolithic man had thrown his axe of flint at a mighty mammoth.

Thus are we reminded of Changing Fortunes.

Emerging from the Isles, overlooking Salamis and Thermopylæ, denoting artistic beauty, I looked across to the Plains of Troy, to scenes of the blind bard's songs, to Ephesus and great Diana's fane, to Sardis and the triumph of Cyrus over rich King Cræsus, and to the charming panorama of Constantinople. Here again whole pages of history were at once unrolled before me.

But here was something more than the triumphal march of conquest, or even the tale of Art and Philosophy. I now realised the progress of individual man and the sweet progress of ideas. The Christian pathway had advanced from the Hill of Calvary through Lesser Asia to the gate of Constantine's Imperial City, and thence to the episcopal gathering at Nicæa.

Here it was that the system of Christianity was formulated, under State sanction and influence, much as we recognise in Christian communities at present. But are we quite sure that in the Changing Fortunes of Christianity from its humble birthplace in Bethlehem to Constantine's palace the change has been for the better, or that, in spite of rich vestments of power, the monkish lords of the East would have been declared by the gentle preacher on Lake Gennesareth as the true descendants of His truth?

As nation after nation rose and fell by that Levantine sea, could Nicæa and Chalcedon denote the effectual and changeless success of the Nazarene creed? It was not long after that the Greek Empire dropped on the unfurling of the Crescent flag, and the early conquests of the Cross were displaced by the Moslem's shout.

The religion of Jesus could not glory in kingly praise, or rekindle the hopes of humanity apart from the breath of the Eternal. It is no temporal reign, but a spiritual breath. The man of travel and thought along Mediterranean shores must often sigh at the decay of peoples and civilisations, but sigh the more that in the twentieth century so much unprogressive hostility to the Kingdom of God should now exhibit itself in the fairest realms of historic light.

Can any reader of the Past fail to be interested in Bible Lands, and desire the purification, as well as growth, of that simple religion that emanated from the Mount of Beatitudes?

# A Threefold Cord

A CHRISTMAS STORY

BY E. BURROWES

"A threefold cord is not quickly broken."

I

THIS story was told me by a nurse from a great hospital; it has the hall-mark of truth in its simple illustration of the great facts of love, and the power of a threefold cord which is not quickly broken.

\* \* \* \* \*

There were just the three of them: Godfrey Lester, his wife Hilda and the boy—little curly-headed Dickie. And I doubt whether there was another trio in the whole of the kingdom whose happiness could compare with this one's. Not that they had much in the way of worldly goods or position; but they were all the world to each other, and their horizon was bounded north, south, east and west by the greatest thing in the world—love.

Lester was a solicitor by day and an author by night; he had all the hopes and aspirations of the man of letters, and the determination and perseverance which should bring him success some day; but that, like many another thing, was slow in coming, and by degrees his dreams seemed as if they were only illusions of his imagination—doomed to end in disappointment.

Hilda of course believed in him as a good wife should. To her the world just then held but two creatures: Godfrey and Dickie. And that the latter might grow up with all the perfections—physical as well as mental—which the former possessed was her constant and most earnest prayer. After this it is not superfluous to add that they were supremely happy.

It was when Dickie was emerging from frocks into the most ridiculous of sailor-suits, that a little cloud no bigger than a man's hand rose slowly on the horizon of Hilda Lester's happiness.

It occurred in this wise.

Lester had been strangely busy and preoccupied of late; even in the evenings, when he was wont to spend some hours writing, and then talking to his wife between the whiffs of his pipe, he began to spend his time making elaborate calculations with

a pencil, over which he would knit his handsome brows fiercely, and then refer to various speculative journals which he brought home with him from the City.

Hilda watched him with growing anxiety. Was it possible that he was bitten with the speculating mania which was sweeping just at that time over many homes? Was he being beguiled into believing the specious tales of company-promoters and sharpers, who professed to make men's fortunes at no risk and only a nominal outlay? She had heard of such things, and she trembled lest Godfrey should have been drawn into the dangerous game.

"What am I doing, old chap?" he said gleefully one night when Dickie in his little trailing nightgown trotted in to say good-night, and asked what Daddy was doing with a pencil and all those funny little figures. "What am I doing, Dickie? Trying to make a fortune for you and Mummie. Think of it, Dick! Rocking-horses and soldiers galore, and a real pony to ride in the Park, and—what else shall we have? A real engine that goes by steam, and a great big box of chocolates from Buzzard's, eh?"

Dickie shrieked with joy and nodded his curly head vehemently.

"And some for Mummie!" he said.

Lester looked across at his wife, who had put down her sewing, and was watching him with anxiety in her pretty eyes.

"Something for Mummie, of course!" he said gaily, tossing the little white figure high in the air in his strong arms, while the paper and pencil fell unheeded to the ground. "A carriage and horses, my son, and a sable cape like a duchess, and twinkling diamonds, and anything she asks for that money can buy. What a time we'll all have, Dick!"

Hilda got up.

"Go to Nurse, Dickie darling," she said gently, "she is waiting for you—run along, pet. There's a good boy."

"And we'll have all those things, Daddy, when? To-morrow?"



"SOMETHING FOR MUMMIE, OF COURSE!"

Lester laughed.

"You're in a hurry, old chap! No, not to-morrow—but some day!"

"Some day!" said the little voice with a trilling laugh, and then he trotted off to bed, and husband and wife were left alone.

"What do you think of the scheme, little woman?" said Lester, coming back to his chair.

Hilda looked up.

"Godfrey—you're not speculating, dear, are you?"

"Why not?"

"Because—I don't like it, Godfrey! Men have been ruined by it before now; it is nothing more nor less than gambling on a gigantic scale after all, no good will come of it, dear. Don't be led into it—for my sake—for Dick's."

Lester laughed a little uncomfortably.

"Nonsense, dear. I know a good thing when I see it. And there is a fortune to be made here. It's as safe as a church, and in a few months—Hilda, have you never thought what it would be like to be—rich? Really rich?"

"My dear—I've had silly dreams as most girls have. But I've never honestly wanted to be richer—except perhaps for Dickie's sake when he grows up. For myself, as long as I have you both, I am rich indeed. I feel like Cornelia and her jewels, you see!"

"Dearest heart! Well, you see it is just for Dickie that I am doing this; for him and for you. And truthfully, Hilda dear—I'm not a fool, you know—and this is going to be a colossal success. It's bound to be. I've—I've embarked as much as I could scrape together in it, and now—it's only a question of a few months and you may wake up to find yourself a rich woman and your Dickie an heir!"

"Or—a beggar."

Lester got up irritably.

"Hilda, you're a regular Job's comforter!" he said. "Haven't I told you it's as safe as a church?"

But Hilda only sighed.

She had heard that phrase—and she distrusted it.

But in this instance the prophecy which

## A Threefold Cord

Lester made so eagerly was destined to come true.

Weeks, months of anxiety passed, and then one great, never-to-be-forgotten day the climax came.

Lester and his wife woke to find themselves rich beyond the dreams of avarice. For the first time in his life Lester had—to use a common expression—struck oil.

The great fortune was made, and Dickie found himself the proud possessor of as many soldiers as his heart desired, and more chocolates than were really good for him.

But Hilda—when the first bewildering burst of surprise was over—sat herself down and looked into the future before them with fearful eyes. Wealth great and boundless had come to them by one of the twists of the wheel of fortune; was it to bring them increase of happiness as well?

\* \* \* \* \*

The Christmas bells were ringing gaily through the snow as Dickie sat up in bed and listened to their soft chiming with bright eager eyes. The nursery was still dark, the shutters and curtains closely fastened, and Nurse was sound, sound asleep. He knew that the row of stockings which he had hung up before he went to bed on Christmas Eve must have been filled by Father Santa Claus; he crept to the foot of his little white bed and felt cautiously. Yes—they were full and bulging out with all manner of lovely parcels; the paper round them rustled as he felt them, and he snuggled down in his warm bed again as Nurse turned over and sighed. Then he lay with his eyes wide open looking into the darkness, and thinking how nice—how very nice it was to be a rich little boy in a beautiful country home, with a pony to ride, and a sleigh in which to drive through the snow, with tinkling bells on the pony's neck. And not so very long ago he remembered that he had had none of these lovely things. They had lived in quite a small house near London, and Daddy had hurried away to his office every morning by an early train, and he and Mother had lived a very quiet life. Then suddenly something wonderful had happened to make them very, very rich. He remembered the exciting move into a large house in a beautiful square, where carriages flashed past the nursery windows, and big trees grew in the middle; and Daddy had bought horses, and a lovely carriage with red wheels, and Mother had suddenly come out in such pretty frocks

every day, and went driving in the Park like a grand lady in a fairy book. And then they had come down into such a pretty country house which Daddy had said was his Christmas present to Mother. And all this had happened so quickly that it was very bewildering to find a house full of soft carpets and lovely furniture and pictures, and everything that could be wanted, and to be waited on by footmen and silent-footed maids. It was like a dream!

Dickie's, speedwell-blue eyes closed sleepily, and he dreamt he was once more a poor little boy rolling a hoop along the roads of a London suburb, and looking with wondering eyes at a lucky child riding a long-tailed pony with a groom behind him.

Dickie was not the only person who wondered sometimes whether all this magnificence was not merely a dream. Hilda Lester, the wife of the most fortunate man who had ever made a big coup on the Stock Exchange—a coup which transformed him from a nonentity into a power; from a poor solicitor and would-be author into a man sought after and deferred to by the greatest in the land—had not yet grown accustomed to her new estate. She was strangely quiet and reserved; and Lester himself, when he had time to think about such things, discovered that the old gaiety which had been so delightful a thing in her seemed to have gone for ever. Did she feel a stranger in her own magnificent palace? The thought irritated him; surely she of all people should appreciate the wonderful stroke of good fortune which had fallen to him; surely she should be grateful to the kind fate which had lifted them to such a height in a moment.

For the last year Lester had entertained and been entertained in the most lavish fashion; encouraged by his success, he plunged heavily on the Stock Exchange, and, perhaps intoxicated by his former luck, grew somewhat reckless. The expenditure of his household under its new *régime* of a housekeeper, and *chef*, and large staff of servants, allowed of no limits, and Hilda was obliged to allow things to go as they pleased. Lester had expressed a wish that she should leave all household matters to the housekeeper, and he did his best to turn his wife into a woman of fashion. But this brought her no happiness; she seemed to drift day by day further from her husband and child; there was no longer that



## A Threefold Cord

sweet interchange of hopes and fears and ideas for Dickie's future. Lester was too busy a man to waste time talking nonsense—as he called it now—with his wife. She had her social and charitable duties to perform. Dickie must of necessity be left much to Governess and Nurse. And so things went on, and hardly a day passed that Hilda did not look back with bitter feelings at those happy days when her circle had consisted of just the happy trio, those days which were gone for ever, trodden underfoot by the ruthless march of success.

She annoyed Lester by her indifference to the flatteries and adulation which were showered upon her; her beauty, which was of so little account in her own eyes, was quite enough to attract others without the glamour of wealth which surrounded her like a halo. This Christmas, when custom and Lester's wish had forced her to fill the house with guests, when she would have preferred to spend the day of days quietly with her husband and child, the weight of wealth seemed to lie upon her with a horrible load. Was it a presentiment of coming evil and sorrow, or merely a passing depression? She strove to shake it off, and exerted herself to the utmost—for Lester's sake. He glanced at her from his end of the brilliant table with its superb silver and Venetian glass appointments, and its priceless pink roses grown in their own houses, with pride as her laugh rang out, and he caught the flush on her lovely face and the brightness of her starry eyes. What man was happier than he?—with everything which money could give him, and the ball of fortune at his feet.

But a change was destined to come over the spirit of his dream, and that before long. The house party had just dispersed, and Hilda was breathing more freely when she found the house quiet and more her own, when Lester announced his intention of going up to town for a few days on business.

He waved his hand to the two faces pressed against the nursery windows, and drove off down the avenue behind his high-stepping horses in the smart phaeton which was the latest addition to the stables.

Three days passed and he did not return, nor were there any tidings of him. At this Hilda wondered, for Lester was always in the habit of writing her a few lines even when he was only absent for a day or two.

And the presentiment of evil which had oppressed her amid all their gaiety at Christmas grew deeper and heavier as the days dragged by and he did not return.

And then one never-to-be-forgotten-day, when the snow was falling softly, beating with a gentle thud against the windows, a letter came from him at last.

Hilda tore it open with eager fingers, while Dickie watched her, and asked when Daddy was coming back, and would he be sure to bring that wonderful little bicycle with him which she had promised to order as a New Year's present?

"DEAREST WIFE,—You were right and I was wrong. Everything has come to an end, and I am—ruined. There is enough for you and the boy; I have seen that all is secured to you, but I can't face it. I leave England to-night, and you will be better and happier without me. Forgive and pray for your wretched—GODFREY."

## II

TWO years ago!

A little time and yet an eternity. To Mrs. Lester in her quiet room it seemed a lifetime of memory and remorse, of suffering and suspense—which would never end except in the grave. Since that dreadful day when ruin descended upon them, and she found herself bereft of husband, friends, and the vast wealth which had been more of a burden than a pleasure to her, she had been able to get no tidings of Lester. He had vanished as completely as if he had been swallowed up by the sea, and yet she would not believe that he was dead. Hope dies hard in the human breast; she believed that some day he would come back to her; some day when the first agony of sorrow and bitterness had passed from him he would remember that there were left to him two treasures, and he would return to them and be comforted. In this hope she was strong and patient, and though the time of waiting was weary and endless, yet she struggled on bravely for his sake and for Dickie's.

Out of the wreck of the fortune which was as easily lost as it had been made, by another twist of fortune's wheel, enough had been saved to secure a modest and very slender competence for Mrs. Lester and her boy. They lived in a small flat high up among the roofs and chimneys of

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London in a quiet unfashionable part, and were as happy as their circumstances allowed them to be. It was hard to satisfy Dickie's eager questions about Daddy and the beautiful home which they had left in such a hurry, but he was a contented little fellow, and he accepted these new conditions without a murmur, looking upon the tiny flat and the scarcity of amusements as rather a funny change from the luxurious life he had led for a time—and rather an amusing one too.

It only wanted a week to Christmas—such a different Christmas from those which had delighted Dickie in years past. To be sure there was plenty of snow outside, and wonderful frost flowers on the windows; and there was a bright fire and warmth and cheerfulness in the pretty though simple room which was their one and only sitting-room. And Mrs. Lester had been shopping in a mysterious way, bringing home sundry little parcels which were carefully hidden away until the day of days came. But it was very, very quiet, for they knew but few people, and there were no parties for Dickie to go to as on former occasions. Last year he had asked the why and wherefore of the sudden change, but he was accustomed to it now and ceased to bring the little cloud of sorrow to his mother's pretty eyes by his eager queries about their friends who had so suddenly disappeared. The friends—so called—of the lucky man Godfrey Lester and his beautiful wife had forsaken them, as rats would a sinking ship, when the news of their disaster was burst upon the world in general.

But when everything looked its blackest a gleam of light came to illumine Hilda Lester's dark place. It has already been said that in the days before his sudden access of wealth, Godfrey Lester had been something of an author. In turning out some of his papers before leaving their palatial home for the tiny flat, Hilda came upon a great bundle of unfinished manuscript in his writing. She put it by, and months later, when she had nothing else to do of importance, she took it out and began to read it. She saw at once that it was powerful and well written—a novel of modern life, with a strong appreciation of the patience and sufferings of the cultured poor, and possessing picturesque style and freshness of idea. This was the great work on which Lester

had been engaged before the speculating mania usurped all his time and attention. It was unfinished, but—a sudden idea came to her. Could she finish it? She had had yearnings towards the literary life herself, and now—could she not reawaken her old longings and finish the work which Godfrey had begun so well? At any rate it was worth trying, for it would give her occupation and a new interest, and for months she wrote and re-wrote and altered till at last the book was finished.

In feverish hope and fear she dispatched the manuscript to a publishing-house of which she had been told, and awaited the result with impatience. If it was good and it was accepted, then—then when Godfrey came home there would be work ready for him to continue. There would be an interest and an occupation the joy of which no man could take from him, and when the answer came she had scarcely the strength to open the letter with her trembling fingers.

Was it to be success or—failure?

It was—*success*.

That was three months ago, and the book was to appear in the New Year, and now Christmas was fast approaching once more, and the sad memories of the past rose up before her as she sat by the fire and dreamt wonderful dreams, in which Godfrey played always the most important part.

The opening of the door roused her.

"That you, Dickie dear?"

"Yes, Mummie. May I go out just round the corner? I want to do some shopping of my very own—and *quite* alone, Mummie."

"Quite alone, dear? But—will you promise to be very careful of crossings, and to come back directly you have done your shopping? You must not go far, Dickie."

"I won't, Mummie, only round the corner, really. And I'll be back d'rectly. I have threepence, and I want to get a—Christmas present for somebody."

Mrs. Lester smiled at the gallant little figure in his red coat and cap, and the sunny blue eyes which were so like Godfrey's.

"Well, make haste, darling, and we'll have tea as soon as you come in."

Dickie nodded, and ran out of the room.

It was very cold out in the brightly-lighted street, but he had not far to go. Just round the corner there was a lovely cake-shop, and in it Dickie had seen some wonderful sugared cakes, one of which he was sure



A LITTLE RED-COATED FIGURE WAS DOWN UNDER THE FEET OF A PAIR OF PRANCING HORSES

Mother would like. It was all pink and white, and so pretty, with a big cherry on the top, and they were only threepence each, although they were quite a good size. His precious threepence, carefully saved up for the purpose, would just buy one, and in three days it would be Christmas Day. He thought he had better get one at once for fear they might be all gone later on.

There were such a lot of people about busily shopping, and such a number of cabs and omnibuses, and now and then a beautiful carriage with prancing horses flashed by, just like the carriage Mother used to drive in when they lived in the big house in the grand square.

Dickie stopped short to watch one of them pass, and then set out over the crossing, carrying the little sugared cake he had bought with such care in a paper bag.

Some one shouted—perhaps it was a policeman—and he stopped—then hurried

forward, and something loomed darkly at his side . . . there was a shout . . . a shriek . . . and then a little red-coated figure was down under the feet of a pair of prancing horses.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Dickie woke up out of a dreadful dream he found himself in a long, long room with rows of white beds in it, and white-capped nurses flitting about. It was a very bright and cheerful place, and some one had been decorating it for Christmas, for there were holly-wreaths over all the pictures and mantel-shelves, and there seemed to be quite a stir of excitement in the whole place. He looked round, and wondered why he felt so tired and achy; and then he suddenly understood what this place was. He remembered the falling, falling under the cruel feet of those big horses . . . and after that all had seemed dark and blank.

And now here he was in a hospital.

## A Threefold Cord

He turned his bright eyes towards the next bed. There was a man in it—a man with fair hair and such a white, tired, worn face. His eyes were shut, and now and then he muttered something to himself in such a hoarse, faint voice. Dickie watched him with fascinated eyes. How dreadfully ill he looked!

Then one of the nurses came and spoke to him in a soft voice. She told him he had been very ill and quite unconscious, and that his mother had been in to see him, but he was asleep when she came, and she was coming again to-morrow, which would be Christmas Day. And he was to lie very still and quiet, for the horses had kicked him, and he would have to be very careful, but he would be quite well before very long if he was good and patient.

"Please," said Dickie, "please may I ask something?"

"Yes, dear; what is it?"

"What is the matter with that poor man in the next bed? He looks so dreadfully ill and so unhappy."

"He is very ill, dear; they only brought him in to-day. He was knocked down by a hansom . . . so it was rather the same kind of accident as yours, you see. And now go to sleep, Dickie, and you will see your mother to-morrow."

The nurse went away, and Dickie still lay and watched the man in the next bed. There was something so familiar about him, and yet of course he had never seen him before.

All at once the man moved and opened his eyes, and looked across at Dickie.

Two pairs of blue eyes . . . two fair heads . . . so like and yet unlike . . . what could it mean? Dickie tried to sit up in his white bed, but he could not move, and an inarticulate exclamation broke from the man.

"*Dickie!*" he said in a hoarse whisper, "my little Dickie!"

And the next moment one of the nurses was hurrying towards the corner in which the two latest accident cases had been placed. For one of them had fainted, and the other was crying excitedly, with outstretched hands and such brilliant tear-wet eyes—

"*It's Daddy—my Daddy come back.*"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Dickie! My darling Dickie!"

The Christmas bells had been ringing all the morning; the air was full of good wishes,

peace and goodwill towards men, and Hilda Lester was kneeling beside Dickie's little bed in the ward of the hospital. A screen had been placed between him and the next bed, and its occupant seemed very quiet.

"Mummie . . . I've got a present for you," said Dickie, holding her tightly round the neck, "such a wonderful present, Mummie dear."

"And you went out to get it, my precious, that dreadful night when I lost you and found you—here," said Hilda, holding the little head to her bosom.

Dickie laughed.

"No . . . I found it here," he said confidentially, "and . . . there is Nurse. Oh! Nurse . . . mayn't Mother see my present?"

The nurse smiled. She had met many tragedies in her life; she had wept over many sad scenes, but never had she encountered such a romance as this . . . in which husband, wife and child were to meet so unexpectedly . . . in an accident ward.

"I think she may," she said, with a glance round the screen, and took away the barrier. Then with one glance at the trio she turned away and left them.

"*Hilda!*"

"*Godfrey! Thank God. . . . Oh! thank God! I have found you at last.*"

And husband and wife were clasped in each other's arms once more.

\* \* \* \* \*

What a Christmas that was!

As Hilda listened to the story of her husband's flight . . . his remorse and hardships . . . his resolve not to return to England until he could right his affairs and begin again on a steady and secure foundation . . . her heart was full of thankfulness.

"I ought to have stayed away longer," he said, "for I'm not quite clear yet, but . . . I simply couldn't do without a peep at you and the boy any longer. The exile was killing me, Hilda."

"Dearest heart . . . a threefold cord is not quickly broken," she said, through the tears which filled her eyes; "we could not have lived without you very much longer either—Dickie and I. And, Godfrey, there is work waiting for you to take up now, work which you will do and can do. Work which will bring honour to your name and grist to the mill at the same time. Can you guess what it is?"

Lester shook his head.

"I have begun to think that whatever I



touch brings sorrow with it," he said. "What is this work, dearest?"

And then she told him of the success which had crowned his writings; of the book which, finished by her, was to appear under *his* name in the New Year.

"And it only remains for you to carry on the work in the future, and I know you can do it, Godfrey!"

"With your help, dear—only with your

help," he said, looking with mute adoration at her earnest face. "Hilda, we will collaborate for the future in that and everything else."

Both Lester and Dickie came out of hospital together, and once more there was a trio as happy as any that could be found under the sun.

And Godfrey and Hilda Lester are well known as collaborators in the literary world.

## Critics

NO one has yet given us the Lives of the Critics. Yet they have been a great race. Dr. Johnson himself was one of them, and Ruskin was another, and between these two what an array we have of brilliant names. Their domain covers many lands, and their voice is heard in all times. We have Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, and Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and from Longinus *On the Sublime* downward how many interpreters. Disraeli, when he defined the critic as an unsuccessful author, was thinking only of an insignificant species, not of the genus, not of the universal manhood from which the greatest critics spring. If the poet be "of imagination all compact," the critic proper is compound of all various gifts, of all contrary ideas, of instinct and experience, of knowledge that gathers, of thought that distributes. He explores like Columbus, he sees like Galileo, he lays waste like Attila, he builds—high, perhaps, as the Tower of Babel. Criticism may be a spirit of destruction, a subtle protestantism of negatives; or it may be the soul of progress, the sculptor's chisel that perfects both form and expression. It is of the very essence of modern life. Our "present day" critic is both gossip and philosopher, pedant and scholar; "higher" or lower, he meddles with all things, human or divine.

Why should we limit our ideas of criticism to one sphere? Some of the finest criticism ever heard has been uttered on the English Bench—exact in word, ripe in its knowledge of man, searching in its analysis. Mr. Morley is as much a critic in his speeches as in his books. Huxley's expositions showed the critical side of

science. And it is not so much the man who sits in the pew that criticises as the man who deals with human life from the pulpit. The most of our philosophy is criticism, and so the half of history; for you cannot question but you must judge; and you cannot state fact but you must weigh. Yet the critical temper may paralyse, and is paralysing, many excellent things.

Byron wrote—

"A man must serve his time to every trade  
But censure—critics all are ready made."

Not so. Fault-finding is not criticism. To be all eye were as bad as to be blind; yet even so, he who truly sees, sees colour and proportion and beauty, and not alone defect. Pope, it is true, was but twenty-one when he wrote his *Essay on Criticism*—was he, then, like the rest, "ready-made"?—it is still good reading, with its many lines now proverbial; but its chief lesson is to show how much the critics of that age, as of every other, had to remember and learn. Disraeli must have approved the lines—

"Some have at first for wits, then poets pass'd,  
Turned critics next, and proved plain fools at last."

He is speaking of books, and we just now of a larger criticism; but the spirit of his introduction applies beyond his first purpose—

"Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss;  
A fool might once himself alone expose,  
Now one in verse makes many more in prose."

'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none  
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

In poets as true genius is but rare,  
True taste as seldom is the critic's share;  
Both must alike from heaven derive their light,  
These born to judge, as well as those to write."

L

## Critics

So possibly in our every-day criticisms on men and things, in our rash pronouncements of opinion, in our current judgments, there may be ten mistakes for the one condemned. We go on, perhaps one day breaking an idol, or another day burning one. Said a lady to a minister of the last century whom she found smoking, "At your idol again, Mr. Isaacs?" "Yes, ma'am," he answered, "burning it." But does the habit of iconoclasm etherealise our beliefs?—a paltry lucifer can kindle a blaze, but does the fire cure our doubtful ways?

When Lowell, pleading for freedom, wrote—

"They are slaves who dare not be  
In the right with two or three,"

some one emended the text to—

"In the right with You and Me."

It is one of the elementary lessons of life, very slowly learned—let us hope that it may be included in our new Secondary Education—that our views of truth are not the same thing as truth itself—that a man's opinions are of very small account except as he himself judges them in relation to the great eternal facts which abide beyond human controlling. Criticism when the Ego rules it is a mere impoverished despotism, always hurtful; the critical temper when it becomes an affair of mere personal likes and dislikes, of preferences or prejudices, is in nothing so mischievous as to the man or woman who cherishes it. A famous reviewer writes of Wordsworth, "This will never do"; but the criticism remains only as measure of his own limitations.

"Who killed John Keats?  
I, said the Quarterly."

But what was the verdict of the coroner's inquest? The *ipse dixit* style becomes in the end anarchic. If Milton could be found at Chalfont, with what eagerness should we listen to even a monosyllabic judgment from him; and what would we not give to hear Shakespere discourse, even in the most personal vein, on Browning or Shelley? But for the most part it is well for lesser men to beware of authoritative words.

Still more dangerous is the criticism which destroys the ideals of an age. Many a base belief has been allowed to shelter behind the fear of change, as the priests

of Italy will tell you. How else can we explain the long life of winking Madonnas, or the arrogance of the fraternity of frauds? Many a delusive tradition also lingers unchallenged because of truth that is mixed with it. But to ruthlessly darken and materialise a people's faith is a crime as great as to exalt a superstition. There is "room and verge enough" for criticism here; it should be a criticism not of speculation, or fancy, or mere scholasticism, but in elucidation of fact; it is the clearer knowledge that is wanted, which rises above passing obscurities. For Truth is like the "tall cliff" of Goldsmith's noble image—

"that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the  
storm;  
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are  
spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head;"

and the people that look upward will never lack an ideal.

May we risk a truism and say it is not the self-assertive but the judicial spirit which makes criticism, whether it be concerned with affairs or books, with the actions of men or their thoughts. But a full judgment needs also a large charity. It is one of the puzzles of history how mixed are its instruments. Man's imperfections lie about him all his days as surely as, in Wordsworth's language,

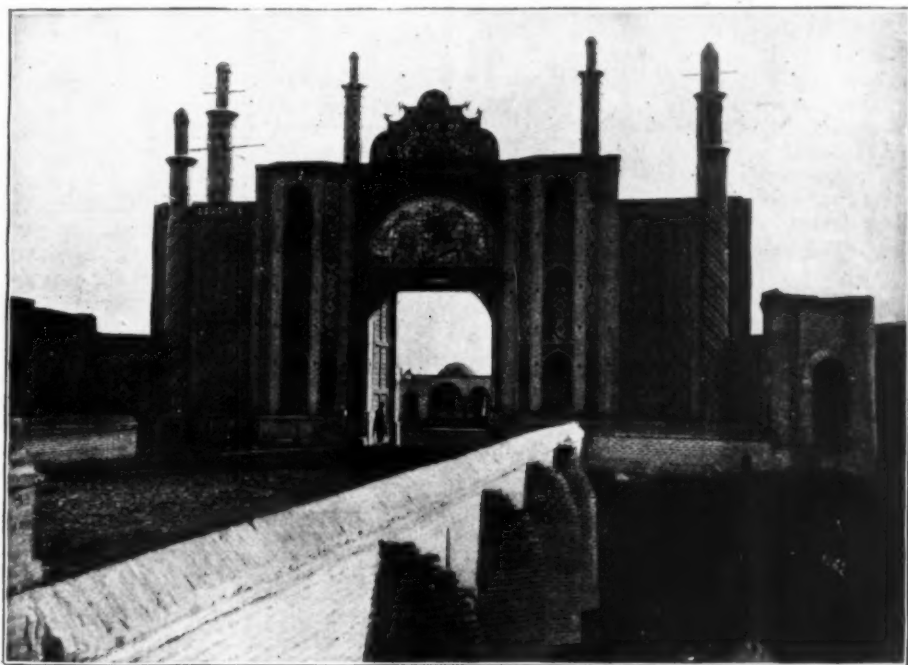
"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

His limitations are on every side. There is no prophet who sees all truth, no teacher who is wise with all knowledge, no poet who can face the sun, or pierce the cloud with unflagging wing. No man is always a hero to both kings and valets. We must not make our criticism a Procrustean bed. Triumphs of good are won by the faulty. Orthodoxy may stumble, faith may waver. Zeal may be misdirected by ignorance, and yet have vital force. Error is sown with truth, as tares with the wheat. Yet often there is more power in broken speech than in finished oratory. The weak things of the world still confound the mighty. In the midst of our confusions, it is the part of a wise criticism to disentangle and show the Best. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

## An Afternoon Call in Persia

AT the risk of perpetrating a Hibernicism, I must remark at the very outset that in the Land of the Lion and the Sun an "afternoon call" is very frequently paid in the early morning. But that is a mere detail. Whether it takes place in the morning or in the afternoon, a visit to a Persian gentleman of some position is always accompanied with much the same

East," the new arrival calls upon the residents first, and not *vice versa*. But certain ceremonies must be performed before he can do so. He or the friend who, if the new arrival is wise, will go with him to introduce him, must first send either a letter or a verbal message to the person whom he is about to visit, stating in very polite terms his desire to have the honour



ONE OF THE GATES OF TEHERÂN

ceremonies. A few of the main incidents of any such visit I now proceed to describe.

In the first place, it is not possible to "drop in" while passing, and leave your card if the master of the house is out. Of course the visit is paid to the *master* of the house, and not to the *mistress*, unless the visitor be a lady. The person paying the visit now to be described is a gentleman just arrived at the large, but decaying, Persian city—once upon a time, but now no longer, the capital of the country—which we shall designate by the name Aspadâna. In Persia, as in many other parts of the "unchangeable

of an interview. Only to people in comparatively humble circumstances is it permissible to send the message verbally. The usual thing is to employ a competent scribe to indite a formally-worded epistle, in which the titles of the host that is to be are all carefully entered. The scribe or *mîrzd*, if he knows his business properly, will very carefully select appropriate and most flowery epithets in which to speak of the recipient of the letter, which will in ordinary cases be addressed to his "lofty doorstep." But if the person upon whom the call is to be made be a prince or some one else in a

## An Afternoon Call in Persia

صاحب عظم قلم مخ  
اسی کہ ہوا را اوقات

فنا نقدیں میدہد و محض دعدا و قرار ملاقات  
ویم صبا را خدمت این بنام میفرماید  
دادند کہ سرکار ما هم قشرباشے سید

عرض شد نمادہ ز فخر دار

A PERSIAN LETTER (REDUCED FACSIMILE)

high position, the letter is addressed to the "slaves" of so-and-so, the idea being that the sender of the epistle deems himself (out of politeness) unworthy to address such a dignitary directly. In this case the sender speaks of himself as "the sincere friend," "the well-wisher," or by some such substitute for the first personal pronoun. He writes in the third person singular, and speaks of the recipient in the third person plural. But to persons of lower rank, the second person plural may be used in the verbs. The most polite thing is to ask your host to inform you at what hour you may call.

On one occasion, when I suggested that I should call in the afternoon of a certain day, in the reply I was asked to come at seven o'clock in the morning instead, as the writer said he would be *busily engaged in saying his prayers in the afternoon*. A Persian, to whom I showed the letter, laughingly said, "Oh yes! he always spends the afternoon *in his garden*." The last words were so meaningly said that I inquired what they signified. I learnt that the phrase in italics was a polite way of expressing the fact that the said gentle-

man's devotions were assiduously paid to *Bacchus* every afternoon. The expression *in his garden* is often used in this sense, for Persians of position are by no means averse to the juice of the grape, or something stronger, if obtainable.

This, unfortunately, is not a vice of very modern introduction. In the *Qabûs-nâmeh*, a work written for his son's instruction by a king of Gîlân about a thousand years ago, the king entreats his son to follow his own noble example, and make it a rule never to go to bed drunk more than *six* nights in the week. But he expresses his fears that his son will not observe such strict moderation as this! A Mohammedan does not see any good in touching intoxicants, unless with the *intention* to exceed.

I am glad to say, however, that on the occasion in question, when I paid my call at 7 a.m., I found my most gentlemanly host perfectly sober!

Well, we shall suppose that the time for the visit has been fixed. Mounting your horse, and accompanied by your friend and by servants on horseback—the more, the better for your dignity—you ride off through the narrow and dirty lanes of the city, paved with cobble-stones, to the house which is your destination. You must be careful that you are not jostled off the narrow path into the ditch (which runs in the middle of the lane generally) by heavily-laden mules, or crushed in some of the narrow archways under which you go; or that your steed is not terrified when obliged to pass a string of camels—an animal which gets out of the way for no one, and the odour of which is peculiarly repugnant to a well-constituted horse. Arrived at the gate, you dismount, and servants, bowing low, usher you into the courtyard. At the door of the house you leave your shoes, and, keeping your hat on (unless your host is well acquainted with European customs), you enter the guest-room. The master of the house advances from the far end of the room to receive you, his sons having probably done so at the door. Pressing your right hand between his own, in lieu of shaking it, and inquiring most earnestly and impressively after your health (while you reciprocate the compliment), he leads you to the end of the room farthest from the door, and offers you the seat of honour.

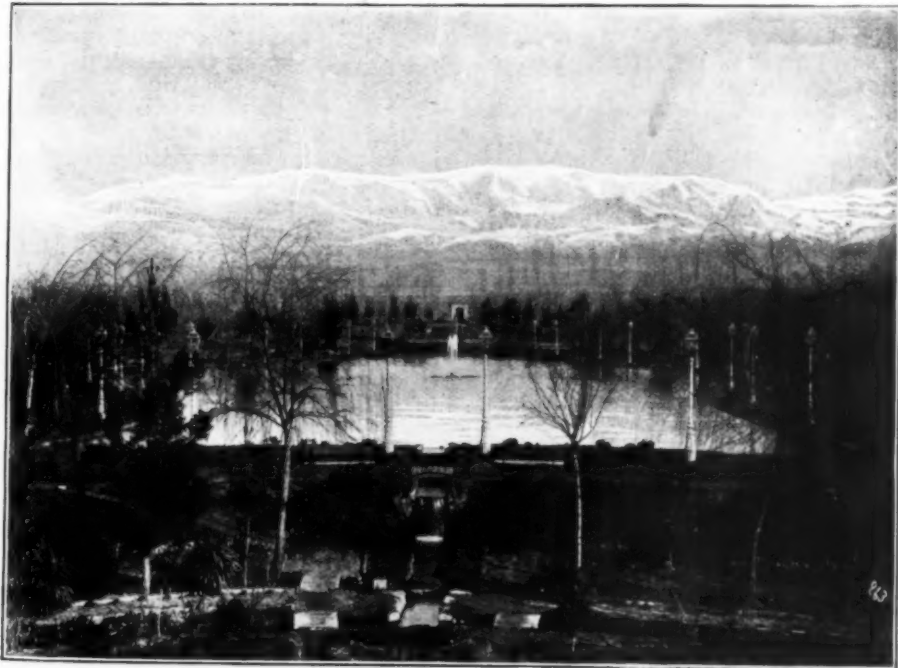
Persian houses are, as a rule, very simply furnished. There are neither tables nor chairs, but only cushions placed on the



## An Afternoon Call in Persia

carpeted floor all round the room. But possibly your host, out of consideration for a European's inability to make himself really comfortable on the floor, has provided one solitary high-backed chair for you to sit on. He conducts you to it, and bowing, in most courteous phraseology and with graceful waving of the hands, invites you to be seated. Etiquette, however, forbids you to seat yourself before he does, and it also forbids the host to sit down before his guest is seated. Hence each politely declines to sit down before the other, and a contest of courtesy ensues, which ends at last in both host and guest seating themselves at the same moment, the guest on his host's right hand. But how about the one solitary chair? Your instinct suggests that, as your host has taken the trouble to provide it for you, the most courteous thing is to take it. But, unless you are a man of recognised official standing, it would be a great mistake to do so. Etiquette forbids you to sit on a seat higher than that of your host. The most polite thing to do, therefore, is to thank him for his kindness, but to say that under no circumstances could you think of sitting

on a seat elevated above his own. You at last succeed in sitting down on the cushions by his side, and the servants, who stand in the centre of the room in front of their master, with their feet together and their hands carefully concealed in their long sleeves, at a sign from your host remove the chair from the room. If you were to sit on it, your arrogance would be most adversely commented on out of doors. The Persians are a most inquisitive people, and having practically no newspapers, talk about even the smallest matter of that kind, until a trivial circumstance becomes known, not without exaggeration, to every one in the place. A clever answer or a joke circulates with great rapidity, and a visitor's character and ability are perhaps rather hastily deduced from some apparently unimportant action or expression. For example, in conversation one should never by any chance stroke one's moustache, for that is taken in the East as a sign of rising anger which one is endeavouring to conceal. Such a thoughtless action will cause one's interlocutor to apologise, and change the subject hastily, in a way which to the uninitiated is apt to be puzzling in the extreme.



SADRE ARAM'S PARK, TEHERÂN  
(Persian Prime Minister)

## An Afternoon Call in Persia



A PERSIAN NOBLEMAN'S GARDEN AT KĀSHĀN

When you and your host are at length seated, you bow to one another and once more ask after one another's health, although a few minutes ago the same tender inquiries were made when you first entered the room. Your host has doubtless invited a large number of persons to meet you, some of whom may be persons of importance (whose position in the room shows this), but most of them are what the Romans would style his *clientes*, who are always ready to swell the train of their patron. You are not introduced to those present, unless they are persons of importance, but you must, on ending your inquiries as to your host's health, bow to every one all round the room in turn, beginning on your right. When bowing you murmur, "*Ahvāl i shumā?*" (literally, "Your states?"), and the reply is always either "*Alhamdo lillāh*" ("Praise be to God"), or "*Az iltifāt i sarkār*" ("From your Lordship's kindness"), or something similar. This implies good health, but must be said to avoid using words of ill omen, even if one be far from well.

Conversation on general topics then begins. As a general rule the weather is not mentioned, simply because there is nothing to say about it. To express your opinion that it is a fine day in a country where it hardly ever rains would lead to a doubt whether you were not suffering from soften-

ing of the brain. There is nothing to be said about politics, unless they be *foreign* politics, for such matters are in Persia supposed to concern the Shāh and his *vazirs* alone. But philosophy and religion are recognised as fitting subjects for discussion, and this gives a missionary or any Christian man a very good opportunity, even in the course of a formal call, of saying what may do good.

The Persians are a most poetical people, naturally eloquent and well able to express themselves. Hence the most ordinary conversation is frequently

embellished with apt quotations from the poets, notably *Hāfiẓ* and *Ša'dī*, and with really beautifully chosen illustrations and parables. Unfortunately a Persian always deems an illustration equivalent to an argument, and hence one has to learn how to rival them in the art of constructing verbal illustrations, and employing to the best advantage any talent for word-painting one may possess, in order to perform one's proper part in a conversation or discussion.

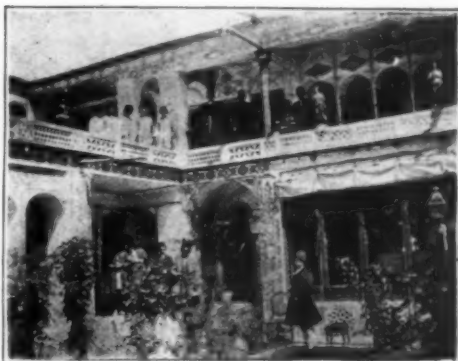
Soon after the visitor has arrived, a servant enters with a *qalyān* in one hand and a small three-legged stool in the other. The *qalyān* differs but slightly from what Anglo-Indians style the *hookah* or hubble-bubble. This is placed on the stool in front of the guest. Should he wish to smoke, he must hold the bowl of the instrument with his left hand, and then, turning the tube first towards his host and then to every other person present, bow and offer it to each in turn. Only when every one has bowingly declined it may the visitor take a few whiffs. The pipe is then passed round in turn, those of highest rank taking it first.

Coffee is then brought in. During a visit (which may last from one hour to three) three cups are generally offered to the guest at intervals. These are very tiny, and the coffee is somewhat thick though without grounds. It is well sugared, but

## An Afternoon Call in Persia

devoid of milk. Small tumblers of tea (milkless also), or in summer of sherbet, may take the place of the coffee. After the second cup or glass the visitor should politely express his regrets for having "been so troublesome," and request permission to retire. This the host *must* first of all refuse; but the request should be repeated after a decent interval, when it will be regretfully granted, as etiquette demands. Very frequently, however, one's host orders in the third cup of coffee, after which the visit is expected to draw to a close.

The expression "to give any one a cup of coffee" has in Persia a somewhat ominous significance. This is due to the fact that the coffee-cup is one recognised medium for conveying poison. Some years ago the governor of the city which we have styled Aspadāna, having long been at daggers drawn with the chief of a powerful mountain tribe, determined in this way to put an end to all trouble. He professed to entertain a great degree of friendship and esteem for the chieftain, and invited him to visit him at his palace. The chief unsuspectingly came, accompanied by his two young sons. For a week they were right royally entertained. But at last one morning when the chief came into his host's presence, he was coldly received, and an attendant soon stepped forward with a single cup of coffee in his hand, which he offered to the guest. The latter could not fail to understand that he was doomed. Preferring, however, steel to poison, he declined the cup, and was there-

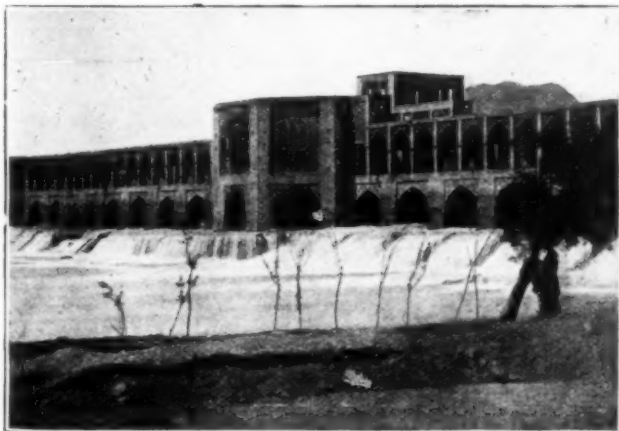


A PERSIAN HOUSE, ISFAHÂN

upon, at a signal from his host, stabbed to death in his presence. This is but a single instance of the way such matters are managed in Persia.

When at last the visit or "afternoon call" which we are describing has drawn to an end, and the visitor rises to depart, he probably finds that his legs refuse to perform their duty for a few minutes, as he has been sitting cross-legged, an attitude dear to the Oriental, but by no means comfortable for a European. However, when he is able to walk, his host accompanies him to the door. First of all, however, the ceremony of pressing or shaking hands takes place, and, in answer to the guest's apology for giving trouble, the host says, "Welcome"—at the end and not at the beginning of the visit. The visitor politely endeavours to prevent his host from walking with him to the door, but the

latter insists upon doing so, saying in Arabic, "*Hatt'al bâb*" ("To the door"). The proper reply to this in the same language is "*Yasqu' l'adâb baina' l'ashâb*" ("No ceremony between friends"). The visitor mounts his horse at last, and rides away, amid the low bows of a number of servants. He has seen something of Eastern politeness, has been assured that the house he has visited and all that it contains are his, and has not only *not* seen the ladies of the family, but has not heard a single remark which would lead him



ALI VERDI KHAN'S BRIDGE, ISFAHÂN

## An Afternoon Call in Persia

to suppose that they have any existence. Two things have seemed to him not a little strange during his visit. One is the number of little notes which his host has probably received and answered during the interview. No apology is made for reading a letter while a visitor is present, and the whole affair is probably arranged beforehand in order to impress the visitor with a proper sense of his host's importance and devotion to business. The second thing which seems strange to us is the freedom with which the servants (all men, of course) enter into the discussion if they think fit. They remain standing in an attitude of respect and speak very respectfully, but it is not considered at all out of place for them to take part in the conversation. If one of them is summoned, he is

frequently addressed as "*Ai bachcheh!*" ("O, child!"). Your host's sons, on the other hand, if present, will be addressed by their father as "*Âqâ*" ("Lord"), and will address their father by the same title.

The slightest transgression of the rigid rules of etiquette is, in Persia as in Europe, deemed rather worse than a crime. It behoves the visitor, therefore, when he has newly arrived in the country, to be very careful to observe the manners of polite society, and not to do anything which may cause offence or lead people to put him down as the Persian equivalent of a "bounder" or a "cad." Our countrymen are not always, in the opinion of foreigners, as careful about these matters as they might well be.

W. ST. CLAIR-TISDALL.

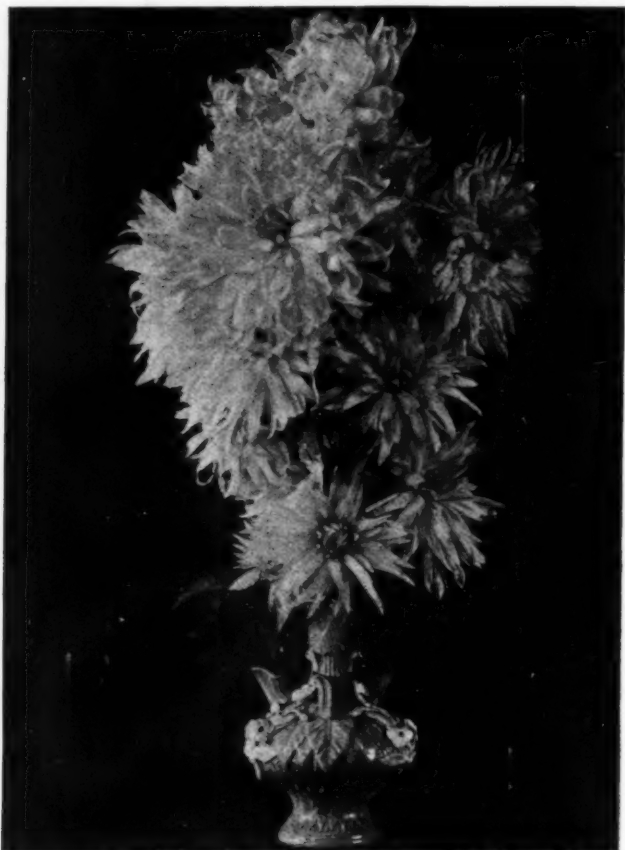


Photo by Edward Connold

St. Leonards-on-Sea

CHRYSANTHEMUMS



## Christmas Feasting with West Australian Blacks

BY J. S. PONDER

"I SAY, Dora, can't we get up some special excitement for sister Maggie, seeing she is to be here for Christmas? I fancy she will, in her Scottish inexperience, expect a rather jolly time spending Christmas in this forsaken spot. I am afraid that my letters home, in which I coloured things up a bit, are to blame for that," my husband added ruefully.

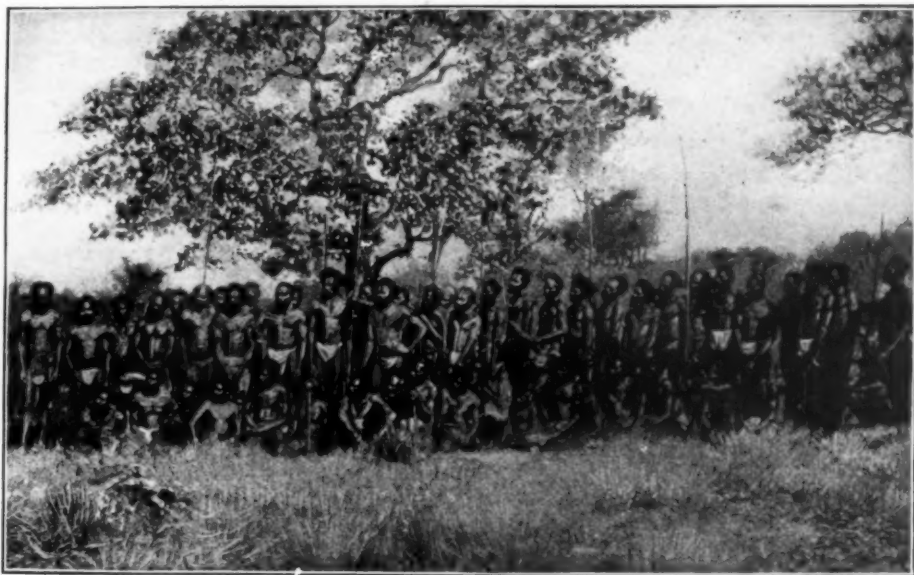
"What can we do, Jack?" I asked. "I can invite the Dunbars, the Connors and

everything except very innocent adventures. Besides, snakes are such loathsome beasts."

"How would it do, then, to give a big Christmas feast to the blacks?" he hazarded.

"Do you think she would like that?" I asked doubtfully. "Remember how awfully dirty and savage-looking they are."

"Oh, we would try and get them to clean up a bit, and come somewhat presentable," he cheerfully replied. "And, Dora," he



A GROUP OF NATIVES, WEST AUSTRALIA

the Sutherlands over for a dance, and you can arrange for a kangaroo-hunt the following day. That is the usual thing when special visitors come, isn't it?"

"Yes," he moodily replied, "that about exhausts our programme. Nothing very exciting in that. I say, how would it do to take the fangs out of a couple of black snakes and put them in her bedroom, so as to give her the material for a thrilling adventure to narrate when she goes back to England?"

"That would never do," I protested, "you might frighten her out of her wits. Remember she is not strong, and spare her

continued, "I think the idea is a good one. Sister Maggie is the Hon. Secretary or something of the Missionary Society connected with her Church, and in the thick of all the 'soup and blanket clubs' of the district. She will just revel at the chance of administering to the needs of genuine savages."

"If you think so, you had better try and get the feast up," I resignedly replied; "but I do wish our savages were a little less filthy."

Such was the origin of our Christmas feast to the blacks last year, of which I am about to tell you.

My husband, John MacKenzie, was the

## Christmas Feasting with West Australian Blacks

manager and part proprietor of a large sheep-station in the Murchison district of Western Australia, and sister Maggie was his favourite sister. A severe attack of pneumonia had left her so weak that the doctors advised a sea voyage to Australia, to recuperate her strength—a proposition which she hailed with delight, as it would give her the opportunity of seeing her brother in his West Australian home. My husband, of course, was delighted at the prospect of seeing her again, while I too welcomed the idea of meeting my Scottish sister-in-law, with whom I had much charming correspondence, but had never met face to face.

As the above conversation shows, my husband's chief care was to make his sister's visit bright and enjoyable—no easy task in the lonely back-blocks where our station was, and where the dreary loneliness and deadly monotony of the West Australian bush reaches its climax. Miles upon miles of uninteresting plains, covered with the usual gums and undergrowth, surrounded us on all sides; beautiful, indeed, in early spring, when the wealth of West Australian wild flowers—unsurpassed for loveliness by those of any other country—enriched the land, but at other times painfully unattractive and monotonous.

Except kangaroos, snakes and lizards, animal life was a-wanting. Bird and insect life, too, was hardly to be seen, and owing to the absence of rivers and lakes, aquatic life was unknown.

The silent loneliness of the bush is so oppressive and depressing that men new to such conditions have gone mad under it when living alone, and others almost lose their power of intelligent speech.

Such were hardly the most cheerful surroundings for a young convalescent girl, and so I fully shared Jack's anxiety as to how to provide healthy excitement during his sister's stay.

Preparations for the blacks' Christmas feast were at once proceeded with. A camp of aboriginals living by a small lakelet eighteen miles off was visited, and the natives there were informed of a great feast that was to be given thirty days later, and were told to tell other blacks to come too, with their wives and piccaninnies.

Orders were sent to the nearest town, fifty-three miles off, for six cases of oranges, a gross of gingerbeer, and all the dolls, penknives and tin trumpets in stock; also (for Jack got wildly extravagant over his

project) for fifty cotton shirts, and as many pink dresses of the ready-made kind that are sold in Australian stores. These all came about a fortnight before Christmas, and at the same time our expected visitor arrived.

She at once got wildly enthusiastic when my husband told her of his plan for giving her some Christmas excitement, and threw herself into the preparations with refreshing energy.

She and I, and the native servants we had, toiled early and late, working like galley-slaves making breadstuffs for the feast. Knowing whom I had to provide for, I confined myself to making that Australian stand-by—damper, and simple cakes, but Maggie produced a wonderfully elaborate and rich bun for their delectation, which she called a "Selkirk bannock," and which I privately thought far too good for them.

Well, the day came. Such a Christmas as you can only see and feel in Australia; the sky cloudless, the atmosphere breezeless, the temperature one hundred and seven degrees in the shade. With it came the aboriginals in great number, accompanied, as they always are, by crowds of repulsive-looking mongrel dogs.

Maggie was greatly excited, and not a little indignant, at seeing many of the gins carrying their dogs in their arms, and letting their little infants toddle along on trembling legs hardly strong enough to support their little bodies, and much astonished when, on her proposing to send all their dogs away, I told her that this would result in the failure of the intended feast, as they would sooner forsake their children than their mongrels, and if the dogs were driven away, every native would indignantly accompany them.

Maggie, with a sigh and a curious look on her face that told of the disillusioning of sundry preconceived English ideas regarding the noble savages, turned to look at Jack, and her lips soon twitched with merriment as she listened to him masterfully arranging the day's campaign.

Marshalling the blacks before him like a company of soldiers—the women, thanks to my prudent instructions, being more or less decently dressed, the men considerably less decently, and the younger children of both sexes being elegantly clad in Nature's undress uniform—Jack vigorously addressed his listeners thus: "Big feast made ready

## Christmas Feasting with West Australian Blacks

for plenty black-fellow to-day, but black-fellow must make clean himself before feast." (Grunts of disapprobation from the men, and a perfect babel of angry protestation from the women here interrupted the speaker, who proceeded, oblivious to the disapproval of his audience.) "Black-fellow all come with me for washee; lubras and piccaninnies (i. e. women and children) all go with white women for washee." (Continued grumbles of discontent.)

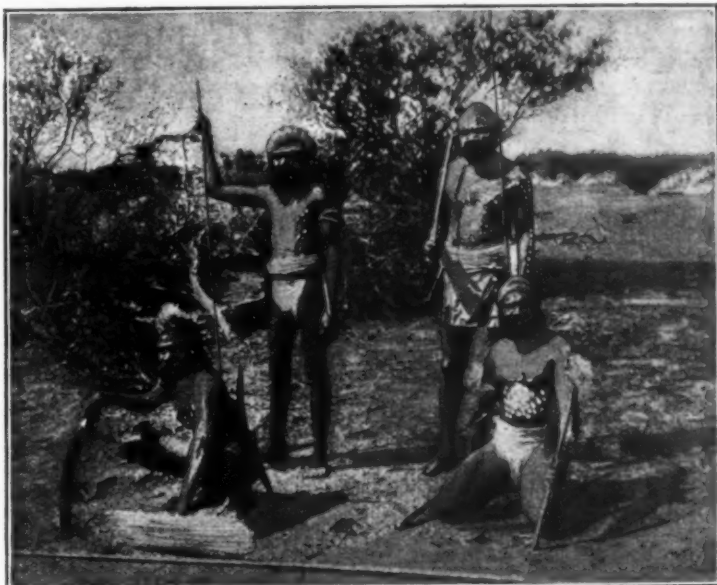
"Clean black-fellow," continued Jack, "get new shirtee, clean lubra new gowna." Then, seeing that even this magnificent bribe failed to reconcile the natives to the idea of soap and water, Jack, to the amusement of Maggie and myself, settled matters by shouting out the ultimatum: "No washee—no shirtee, no shirtee—no feaste," and stalked away, followed submissively by the aboriginal lords of creation.

The men, indeed, and, in a lesser degree, the children, showed themselves amenable to reason that day, and were not wanting in gratitude; but in spite of Maggie's care and mine, the gins (the gentler sex) worthily deserve the expressive description: "Manners none, customs beastly."

They were repulsive and dirty in the extreme. They gloried in their dirt, and clung to it with a closer affection than they did to womanly modesty—this last virtue was unknown.

We, on civilising thoughts intent, had provided a number of large tubs and soap, and brushes galore for the Augean task, but though we got the women to the water, we were helpless to make them clean.

Their declaration of independence was out at once—"Is thy servant a dog that I should do this thing?" Wash and be clean! Why, it was contrary to all the time-honoured, filthy habits of the noble



WEST AUSTRALIAN NATIVES, ARMED CAP-À-PIÉ

self-respecting race of Australian gins, and "they would have none of it." At last, in despair, and largely humiliated at the way in which savage womanhood had worsted civilised, Maggie and I betook ourselves to the long tables where the feast was being spread, and waited the arrival of the leader of the other sex, whose success, evidenced by sounds coming from afar, made me seriously doubt my right to be called his "better half."

After a final appeal to my hard-hearted lord and master to be spared the indignity of the wash-tub, the native men had bowed to the inevitable.

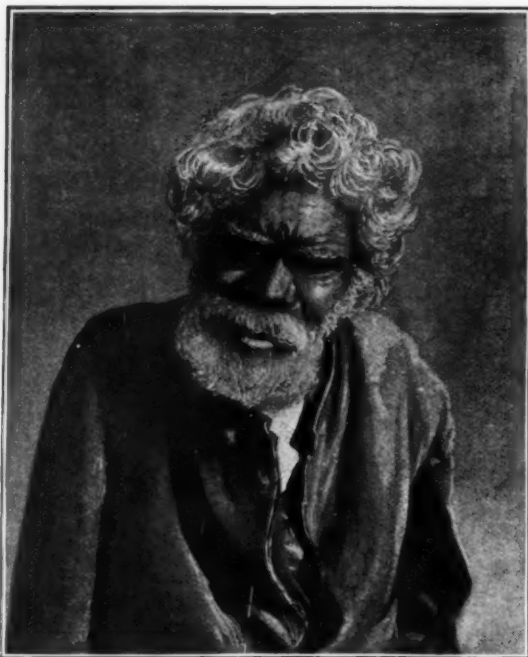
Each man heroically lent himself to the task, and diligently helped his neighbours to reach the required standard of excellence.

Finally all save one stubborn aboriginal protestant emerged from the tub, like the immortal Tom Sawyer, "a man and a brother."

Well, the feast was a great success. The corned and tinned meat, oranges, tomatoes, cakes and gingerbeer provided were largely consumed. The eatables, indeed, met the approval of the savages, for, like Oliver Twist, they asked for "more," until we who served them got rather leg-weary, and began to doubt whether, when night came, we would be able to say with any heartiness we had had "a merry Christmas."

## Christmas Feasting with West Australian Blacks

Clad in their clean shirts, and with faces shining with soap-polish, the men looked rather well, despite their repulsive and generally villainous features. But the women, wrinkled, filthy, quarrelsome and disgusting, they might have stood for incarnations of the witch-hags in *Macbeth*;



A PATRIARCH, WEST AUSTRALIA

and as we watched them guzzling down the food, and then turning their upper garments into impromptu bags to carry off what remained, it is hard to say whether the feeling of pity or disgust they raised was the stronger.

After the feast, Jack, for Maggie's entertainment, tried to get up the blacks to engage in a corroboree, and give an exhibition of boomerang and spear-throwing; but the inner man had been too largely satisfied, and they declined violent exertion, so the toys were distributed and our guests dismissed.

When she and I were dressing that evening for our own Christmas dinner, Maggie kept talking all the time of the strange experience she had passed through that day.

"I'll never forget it," she said. "Savages are so different from our English ideas of them. Did you notice the dogs? I counted nineteen go off with the first native that left. And the women! Weren't they horrors? I don't think I'll ever feel pride in my sex again. But above all, I'll never forget the way in which Jack drove from the table that native who hadn't a clean shirt on. It was a picture of Christ's parable of the 'Marriage Feast,'" she added softly.

Before I could reply the gong, strengthened by Jack's imperative "Hurry up, I'm starving," summoned us to dinner.

## If Dreams Came True!

IF dreams came true, Beloved, I should wake  
To find you at my side as once of yore,  
And I should see your beauty, and should take  
Your hand in mine, and whisper low once more  
Love's tender secrets, old, yet ever new,  
And sweeter than the sunshine, or the blue  
Of summer skies—if but my dreams came true!

If dreams came true, Sweetheart, your soft replies  
Would crown me with love's perfect joy at last  
Who long have borne its pain; and in your eyes—  
Dark wells of magic—all the weary past  
Would vanish, and my soul would learn anew  
The ways of love and worship sweet,—if you  
Of whom I dream would bid my dreams come true!

MARY FARRAH, I.L.A.



# London Bridge

CITY LIFE IN MEDIEVAL TIMES

BY WILLIAM SIDEBOTHAM

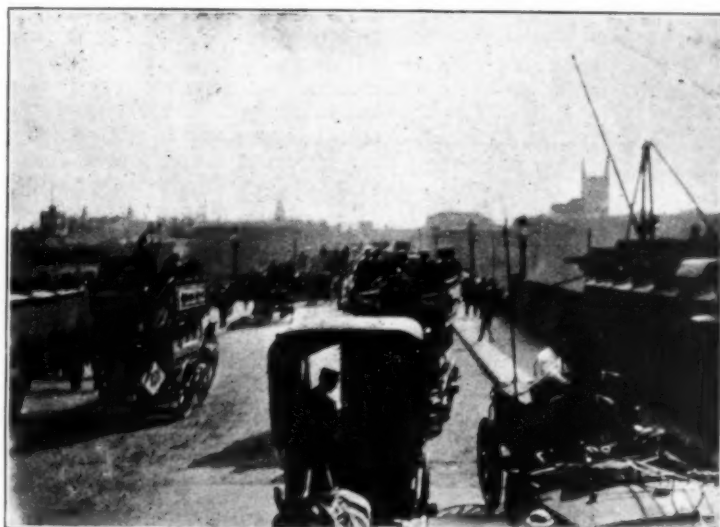
*Photos by the Author and G. G. Kent*

THERE is considerable truth in Guizot's dictum, "If you are fond of Romance read History," for from the time when the Romans took possession of London early in the first century of the Christian era down to the present day, the events which have taken place in the Metropolis are as remarkable and fascinating as any that are to be found in the pages of fiction. Although there is no proof of the tradition that the Apostles visited London, it is not improbable that the first Christian Missionaries landed in these islands. It is, moreover, on record that the early efforts at Christianising were a



*Photo by G. G. Kent*

REMOVING THE MASONRY FROM THE RECESSES OF LONDON  
BRIDGE, APRIL 1902



*Photo by G. G. Kent*

VIEW OF LONDON BRIDGE FROM CITY SIDE, AUGUST 1902

failure; but Tacitus in his writings shows that even in his time the city had become of great importance on account of its commerce; and in 604, when Sebert was King, a cathedral was built by Mellitus, who was the first bishop.

London in those days, as is well known, was surrounded by the walls built by the Romans, and the merchant princes and noblemen had palaces in the streets close to London Bridge.

## London Bridge

The only other locality of importance was the City of Westminster, where the Court resided. There were, for a long period, but few houses between the two cities, owing to the troublous times. What a change has since taken place! Greater London has now a population of nearly 6,000,000, while its rateable value is nearly £40,000,000. It is impossible to grasp the meaning of these colossal figures; but an idea of the magnitude of the Metropolis may be obtained by mentioning that the whole populations of Federated Australia or that of Canada do not equal the population of London.

In consequence of the ever-increasing traffic it has been found necessary to widen London Bridge, despite the fact that within a comparatively brief period the Blackwall Tunnel and the Tower Bridge have been opened. Under the scheme, the cost of which will be about £100,000, it is proposed to increase the width between the parapets from 53 feet 5 inches to 65 feet. The roadway will be increased from 34 feet to 37 feet; and the footways from nine feet to fourteen feet; while on the outer edge a stone balustrade is to be placed which will be supported with granite cor-

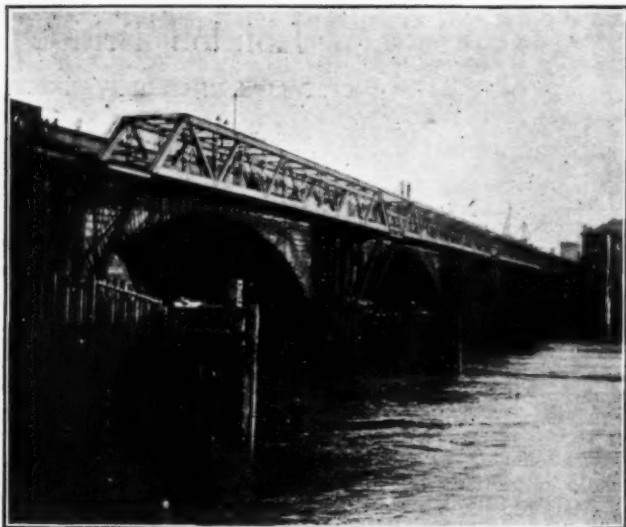


Photo by G. G. Kent

VIEW SHOWING TEMPORARY FOOTPATHS, SEPT. 1902

bellings or cantilevers. It is further proposed to demolish the recesses, and to form refuges at intervals in the centre of the roadway, which will also provide facilities for the proper lighting of the bridge. The whole of the structure is to be thoroughly drained, and when the alterations are completed—it is expected that they will take about three years—the bridge will be one of the most imposing in the Metropolis.

As many of the most stirring events which are recorded in the chronicles of fame have taken place at this spot, it will be interesting to recall some of the chief incidents, and to relate briefly the history of the various bridges. It is not definitely known when the first London Bridge was erected, but one existed in 994 when Olaf the Dane invaded England in the reign of Ethelred II.; and it is a remarkable circumstance that up to the year 1738, when Westminster Bridge was erected, there were in the Metropolis no other means of crossing the river except by boat. It was this fact which gave the great "Silent Highway" and London Bridge such commanding importance. All classes of the community met on the Thames. The various Kings and Queens on their visits to the Tower were, up to comparatively



LONDON BRIDGE TRAFFIC, TAKEN FROM A RECESS

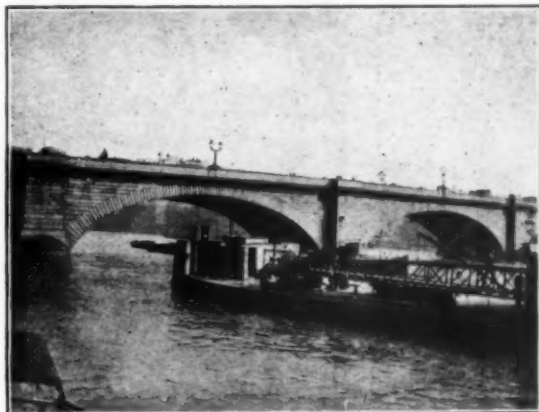
## London Bridge



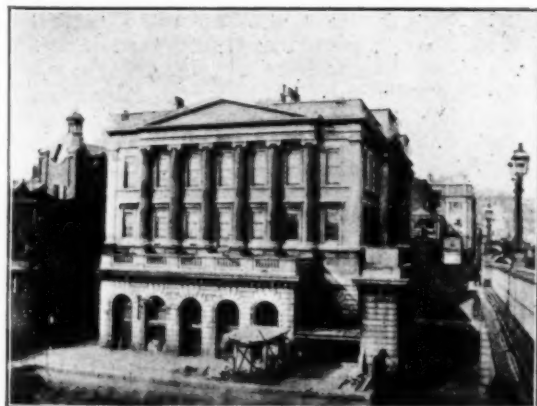
THE TOWER BRIDGE AS SEEN FROM LONDON BRIDGE

recent times, to be seen in their State barges; the merchant princes were to be observed on their way to and from the Court at Whitehall; and the landing of provisions and fish at Queenhithe and Billingsgate respectively were the common sights of the Londoner of those days. The Lord Mayor's show, too, as is well known, used to proceed westward by means of barges instead of in procession as at present. All the earlier structures were erected a little below the present one—in continuation of Gracechurch Street.

The first authentic account of London Bridge is, curiously enough, given by an Icelandic historian named Snorrio Sturlesonius, who



LONDON BRIDGE, SHOWING OLD SWAN PIER



FISHMONGERS' HALL

says that in the reign of Ethelred II., surnamed Unready, an ally of his, Olaf the Norwegian, attacked the Danes who had fortified themselves in Southwark, fastened his vessels to the piles of the bridge, and dragged down the whole structure. It may be remarked *en passant* that St. Olave's Church perpetuates the memory of this King, who afterwards became a martyr. The first wooden bridge seems to have been destroyed in a storm which swept over the Metropolis, demolishing several hundred houses, and taking the roof off Bow Church. Another wooden bridge was erected, but early in the reign

of Stephen it was destroyed by fire.

In view of these unfortunate events it was decided to build a more permanent bridge, and in 1176 the first stone structure was commenced, from designs of Peter of Colechurch, a chaplain of St. Mary Colechurch in the Poultry. This bridge, which took about thirty-three years to build, consisted of twenty arches, a gatehouse at each end, a drawbridge for larger vessels, and a chapel and crypt in the centre dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, and in which the architect himself was buried at his death. The bridge was afterwards covered on either

## London Bridge

side with houses and shops. The early history of this structure was, like its predecessors, very unfortunate, for a short time after its completion it was considerably damaged by a great fire which raged on either side of the river, and which in those days, owing to the houses being built of wood, were very frequent. In consequence of the excitement which prevailed, many people ran on the bridge for safety, and about 3000 were either burned to death or were drowned. It is in connexion with this bridge (which existed until 1831, when King William IV. and Queen Adelaide publicly inaugurated the present structure) that most of the historic events of mediæval London took place.

It was here in 1263 that the citizens grossly insulted Eleanor of Provence, for the part she had taken in opposition to the Barons, who were still strenuously trying to obtain a final settlement of Magna Charta. The Queen, accompanied by her ladies-in-waiting, had left the Tower *en route* to Windsor, and when the gaily-decorated barge reached the bridge, a large crowd which had assembled there for the purpose began to throw mud and heavy stones into the royal boat, at the same time shouting and hissing. So fierce was the attack that Her Majesty was compelled to return to the Tower. Another turbulent scene occurred in the same year when Simon de Montfort forced his way into the City, driving King Henry, who had previously locked the gates and thrown the keys into the river, back to the Tower.

When so much has recently been said about the "methods of barbarism" in regard to the recent war, it is interesting to recall the practices of a few centuries ago, with the object of showing the wonderful improvement which has taken place in our methods of conducting warfare. After the defeat of Wallace by Edward I. in 1305, the

Scottish patriot was brought to London, and conveyed to Smithfield, where he was hanged and his body afterwards shockingly mutilated. His head with others was afterwards stuck on a pole and placed on London Bridge, where, in accordance with the custom of the day, it probably remained for years. The following year Simon Fraser, one of his companions, was executed, and a Scots ballad in the Harleian Collection has the following verse referring to the tragic affair:

"Many was the wives-chil' that looked on him  
that day,  
And said, Alas! that he was born, and so  
vilely forlorn,  
So fierce man as he was.

Now stands the  
head above the  
town bridge,  
Fast by Wallace,  
sooth for to say."

It was by way of London Bridge that Wat Tyler entered the city of London in 1381. Tyler, who was a blacksmith of Dartford, was so incensed at the imposition of a "poll tax" of three groats on every person above fifteen years of age, that

he and a number of others decided to oppose the tax by force, and in the course of a few days he was at the head of 100,000 men. They murdered and plundered in every direction, and even beheaded the then Archbishop of Canterbury. Tyler and his followers became so bold that they went to Smithfield, where Richard II. was holding a great tournament, which was intended to out rival the magnificent feasts and jousts given by Charles of France; and the chief rebel's behaviour was so threatening that Sir W. Walworth stabbed him in the throat, causing his death. Sir William, who was then Lord Mayor, was also a member of the Fishmongers' Company, and to perpetuate this gallant deed they placed a statue in their hall in honour of their distinguished colleague, which is still one of the most cherished mementoes of the past.



BILLINGSGATE



## London Bridge



THE MONUMENT

The circumstances connected with the rebellion of Jack Cade are well known, and it is only necessary to point out that after fighting his way to the foot of London Bridge the rebel passed over the drawbridge, cutting the ropes which supported it, and eventually burning many of the houses in the district. The citizens rose to arms, and the fight became of the most sanguinary nature, Tower guns firing with great effect on the men of Kent. For a time both sides fought with great gallantry, but, wearied with the struggle, they ultimately retired to their respective quarters, and soon afterwards Cade's men melted away, and the rebel himself, while hiding in a garden, was slain, and his head was stuck on a pole and placed on the very bridge-gate where a short time previously he had fixed the head of Lord Say, the murdered Treasurer of England. Among other tragic incidents which may be mentioned was that of the Kentish Mariners, under Falconbridge, who in 1471 *inter alia* burned the gate and fourteen houses on the bridge, and the attack on the City by Sir T. Wyatt in 1554. Before the latter was repulsed he succeeded in partially destroying the Bishop of Winchester's palace, together with the valuable collection of books which it contained.

London Bridge, however, has not always been the scene of such tragic events, for at various periods it has resounded with the

demonstrations of loyal affection by the populace in welcoming monarchs, and it has witnessed great pageants of chivalry. Many of such incidents might be recorded, but two or three will suffice to give an idea of the remarkable changes which time brought about. Students of history know the stormy scenes which took place between reckless and extravagant Richard II. and the people of London; but before this monarch was deposed and murdered, he became reconciled to the citizens. When in 1392 His Majesty, who was accompanied by the Queen, entered the City by London Bridge, he was accorded a great welcome, and both were presented with valuable gifts.

Four years later, on the occasion of his entry into the City after his marriage with the daughter of Charles VI. of France (his previous wife having died) the crowd was so great that a number of persons were crushed to death. A short time previously a sort of international contest was held on the bridge in the presence of the King and Court. This contest, which took the form of what was then familiarly known as a "joust," was between Sir D. Lindsay representing Scotland, and Sir J. Welles, who was England's champion. The former proved victorious, and in accordance with the conditions a safe-conduct was provided for him both for his journey to London and



CHEAPSIDE, WITH BOW CHURCH, CONTAINING  
RENOWNED BOW BELLS

## London Bridge



THE FAMOUS GUILDHALL

his return to Scotland. Another scene of great rejoicing took place on the bridge when Henry V. returned with the French captives from the field of Agincourt. On these occasions the Lord Mayor, who was accompanied by the Corporation and leading citizens, always journeyed from the Guildhall in full state; indeed, this most famous building and its predecessor have for a period of over eight hundred years been most intimately connected with the remarkable vicissitudes of the City, and even now forms and ceremonies are observed, such for instance as at the election of the Lord Mayor and sheriffs, which were practised many centuries ago.

What a change has taken place since that time! Cheapside—then known as “the

Chepe”—was a market-place, where at intervals beneath the famous Bow Bells various Sovereigns have witnessed tournaments and martial pageants; but the thoroughfare is now one of the busiest on the earth, and the surrounding streets, the names of which indicate the particular kind of business that was formerly carried on there, are at present occupied by merchants and traders doing business in all parts of the world. Billingsgate, however, still retains its position as one of the leading fish markets of the world; but owing to its somewhat dingy approach, and to the unpretentious character of the building itself, a stranger would never think, if he were not told, that such a vast amount of business was done there daily, especially if he were to visit the place in the afternoon, when the work of the day has been practically finished.

Within a few yards of this spot are several features of interest, including the Monument (a fluted Doric column) designed by Sir Christopher Wren to commemorate the great fire of 1666, and erected at a cost of about £14,000; and the Fishmongers' Hall, a handsome Anglo-Greek building, which still stands on the west side of London Bridge, on the very spot where that important and rich corporation had a stronghold in the reign of Edward III. A few yards higher up the river is the Old Swan pier, where swans formerly had their nests, and in connexion with which it was enacted that those which went through the bridge became the property of the Constable of the Tower. New buildings have sprung up in every direction, but the remarkable events which have taken place in the neighbourhood of London Bridge will be for ever enshrined in the famous chronicles of the City.

## The Old World and the New

**M**Y brief holiday was fast coming to its end, and the promise made to my colleague to visit her old Auntie remained unfulfilled. When one's year is mainly spent in hard work, three weeks' freedom passes all too quickly, and even a single afternoon can be ill spared. Still, I had promised, so I went.

I knew little about “Aunt Matilda,” save that she was old-fashioned, and of straitened means; and imagination had pictured an uninteresting interview, shortened to the briefest time com-

patible with politeness. Instead—I found myself in a world of dreams. It was like stepping back a hundred years to enter this “haunt of ancient peace.” Leaving the valley with its river brawling over great mossy boulders, I climbed a short, steep carriage-drive, growing green from disuse. Turning in at a wicket-gate, and stooping beneath the trailing branches of a weeping-willow tree, I saw before me a straight path, bordered on each side by strange shapes of cats and birds, cut in the yew hedge. At the

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end of it stood my old lady, framed in the low doorway. No sour old maid this, but a woman of rare sweetness, her silver hair covered with a cap of quaker-like simplicity; the grey gown setting off to perfection the delicate pink and white of her complexion. Here was the face of one whose life had been lived out in the open, under the blue of God's heaven.

Away beyond the house stretched the steep hill I had left, its summit glowing with bright patches of purple heather. On the other side, through the trees in the valley, I could see the delicate tracery of the great east window of the Abbey, and a bit of its wall standing out roofless against the summer sky. Crowds of tourists came there, even as I had come, by the train, but none of them penetrated to this quiet sanctuary. I stood a moment, drinking it all in, filling my soul with visions to help me through many a grey day in London town. But my hostess interrupted me. "Come in, my love, come in. You are Miss —? Pollie's friends are my friends; I am glad to welcome you. You will be tired after your long walk." And she led me in.

"Visitors always like my house, and I like to show it them," she said; "it is very old, a part of the old monastic buildings. You shall see it all when you are rested;" and she opened a door into the quaintest of low-ceiled rooms, and placed me gently in an ancient high-backed oak chair, with faded cushions of silken patchwork. The sweet air blew in through the diamond-paned lattice window. "The cry of the river" was the only sound that reached me, save the droning of the bees in the flowers outside.

"Don't you find it very dull in winter?" I ventured to ask.

"Dull, my dear! Hannah and I have far too much to do for us to find it dull. We are busy as the day is long."

I wondered vaguely as to the necessity for such full occupation; but when we went in to tea, I began to understand. My foot slipped on the polished floor, real old oak, dark with age and much beeswaxing; and when we sat down to the tea-table, I no longer doubted that mistress and maid found their time well filled. The spotless damask, the shining silver, the delicate china, all spoke of minute personal care. And then the food! Such bread, such butter, such scones, such raspberry-jam! Did ever any London banquet taste half as good as that home-made fare, eaten in such surroundings?

The meal over, I was escorted round the house; its treasures were too manifold for me to do more than glance at them, but I brought away a mental picture of oddly-shaped rooms, queer little cupboards built into the walls, carved oak, old china, and faded hangings; and when I recall these, I smell again the sweet, faint, old rose-leaf smell that pervaded all.

My hostess spoke in mysterious tones of dungeons and dark rooms, and even of a secret underground passage to the Abbey.

"Do you never feel nervous?" I questioned, with a glance at the gun of antique pattern

which hung on the cross-beam in the kitchen. She followed my eyes with a smile.

"Oh, no! we never think of it. Besides, 'Bobs' is our valiant protector," patting the noisy little terrier with the sharp eyes and the strangely modern name.

"Now you must see my dairy," and I followed her through spotless stone passages—where hung great fitches of home-cured bacon—out to a small ecclesiastical-looking building, once the monastic chapel; its high-pitched roof and mullioned windows seeming strangely at variance with the shining milk-pans and pats of golden butter. Here I learned the mysteries of "separating," and watched the deft skimming of the cream: then, turning away with reluctance, I followed again, through yet another doorway, catching in passing a hasty glimpse of rows and rows of warm-tinted eggs, all ranged in their stands, with careful precision as to date. Outside in the yard were the hens, gathering expectantly about my hostess, as we made our way to see the fortnight-old calf with its lustrous wistful eyes, and stood to watch its older relations come capering up to the gate for their evening meal of skim-milk.

Built into the spacious stone barn, high up in its wall, I could see a row of crosses, telling plainly of the religious character of its builders. Imagination seemed to people the place once more with the figures of grey-robed monks; and I had forgotten Aunt Matilda, when I heard her speaking anxiously—"And now, my dear, I don't want to hurry you, but be sure you leave yourself time to catch your train."

There was ample time, and I knew it, but not for worlds would I have disturbed the serene atmosphere by any sign of hurry; so, carrying a carefully-tied-up jar of clotted cream, and entrusted with many messages for "Pollie," I bade a cordial farewell to the gentle old lady, and turned my face once more to the world.

A sharp shower of rain as I reached the railway-station drove me quickly to the shelter of the bare little waiting-room. There was half-an-hour still before the train left, and I had fallen into a reverie. Visions of the afternoon's adventure were floating through my brain, when the sound of voices roused me. These were the tones of cultured women, full of life and vigour, and without a trace of the country accent with which I had become familiar during my three weeks' holiday. "Londoners," I murmured, twisting round to get a better view.

Two girls had come in, and were in full tide of talk without a thought of the silent listener in the corner. "When do you begin to read for your next?" asked one, in the garb of a nurse, alert and professional down to her very shoe-strings.

"In October. I got so played out with swotting too hard before my third, that I mean to give myself ample time before my final."

"Is the final very difficult?"

"No—o; you see, you've been all over the ground before; and it's much more interesting than the other exams."

## The Old World and the New

"I can't think how you can read so many hours a day—I couldn't."

"Oh! yes, you could, if you had to. It's pretty hard though, when you feel yourself getting played out. I got so seedy I didn't know how to keep on. But there's nothing like bed when you get into that state. I found getting up took away all the remaining energy I had, so at last I hit on the lovely plan of not getting up at all, but reading where I lay. It answered splendidly."

"What are the final subjects?"

"Surgery—I haven't done much surgical work;" with a glance at the capable, scientific fingers—"and pathology and medicine of course."

Here followed technical details, unintelligible to me, and I began to study the speaker. I saw a strong, athletic figure, clad in garments more suggestive of comfort than elegance. The short skirt, the square-toed shoes, the loose coat with

its bulging pockets, all spoke of the woman who has more to think of than personal appearance. But the battered sailor-hat shaded a pair of penetrating grey eyes, the forehead was broad and intellectual, and the mouth and chin full of character. A clear, healthy skin showed a thorough understanding of the advantages of play. But what a girl! How young! Surely she had not seen more than three-and-twenty summers. Truly I had come back from my dream-world with a jerk.

This an embryo doctor! I wondered what my hostess of the afternoon would say!

I listened again. Nurse was talking now—"and so, you know, he prescribed digitalis—"

"Digitalis! Why I should only give that in a case of—"

The train rushed in, and I heard no more, but as I journeyed to my destination, it seemed to me that I had travelled far that day; even from the old world to the new.

F. E. S.

## How I Spent Christmas

### Some Prize Essays

I

#### In Canada

IT may be well as an introduction to my description of "How I spent Christmas" (in Canada) to remind its possible readers that the Great Dominion comprises within its bounds almost all varieties of nationality, climate, and religion to be found on the continent of Europe.

In the provinces of Quebec, Ottawa, Southern Ontario, and British Columbia the conditions of life remind one of those existing in the south of France, north of Italy, and north of Spain, while in Manitoba and the Territories, the latter being my own adopted country, both the climates and people of Russia, Germany, Sweden and Norway, Iceland, and the British Isles are well represented. Of course all these keep Christmas after the fashion of their own particular "old country." For instance, the Germans set up their Christmas trees, and in remote settlements, in the absence of the traditional small fir, cultivate a seedling poplar for the purpose as a house plant, the warmth of their low, sod houses causing it to put out leaves in December.

The Doukhobors celebrate the season in their own somewhat dour and vegetarian fashion, and the Swedes and Icelanders, good settlers in the main, by a week of intoxication. The Scotch settler often ignores the festival altogether, "gaein' to the bush for a wheen sticks," or to his stack on the prairie for hay as on other winter days. The French and Irish Roman Catholics travel far to the celebration of mass, while from the point of view of an English resident like myself, Christmas-keeping in the North-West may be mostly described by negatives. It is

evident that in a country where the thermometer in December seldom rises above zero, and often registers forty or fifty degrees below, family meetings and "church-going," which would involve long sleigh-drives, are uncertain, often impossible. Then, as neither holly nor mistletoe is indigenous to the country, and any kind of evergreen extremely scarce, decorations of either houses or churches are out of the question, though I know an old Englishwoman who produces a dry stick of holly from her trunk brought from "home" long ago, and sticks it in her window to remind her that there Christmas is still being kept in familiar fashion.

Though we often send to Toronto, some 1400 miles, for presents for our children and neighbours, the Christmas-box system as understood in England is unknown, for who would think of tipping a C.P.R. conductor or district mail carrier a shilling as you would the postman and railroad guard in your native village? and though your nearest station agent might accept the proffered turkey, he would probably laugh, and wonder if you thought he could not support his family without your help. Here there are no very rich people, but "the poor are *not* always with us," so the hundred and one ways in which benevolence finds vent in the Christmas season in England are at present unnecessary.

On our own farm, as soon as the "freeze up" begins, a fat beast is killed for winter use, then sausages are made, the superfluous fat is rendered down for soup-making, and a fine Christmas roast cut and put aside for the occasion. An early opportunity is taken to trade a tub of butter at our store for the materials for making mince-pies and plum-pudding, and the day when it comes is welcomed



## How I Spent Christmas

as an excuse for leaving all but the most necessary work till to-morrow. The men-folk go out shooting prairie chickens, and, if the weather be favourable, stalking the elk or jumping deer. The young people, well wrapped in furs, find great fun on the toboggan slide, or in moderate weather sweep the loose snow from a frozen slough and attempt skating, not always with much success, for they do too much necessary work to be expert at the unnecessary.

My Christmas as a rule is spent in watching the oven and keeping the pot boiling, and otherwise supplying the bodily wants of a large family; but while thus engaged I find time to overhaul the English mail, which I have carefully put by as it came as my own particular Christmas treat, and one must live as I do, out of the great world, to realise the joy that can be extracted from packets of Christmas cards, magazines, and newspapers, not to mention the reading of letters from friends who make this an opportunity of showing that though long separated from them you are not forgotten. Then my cooking having been brought to a successful conclusion, as shown by the rapid disappearance of its results at dinner, and apples and oranges having been distributed to the company, my personal participation in Christmas enjoyment ends by a mighty effort in dish-washing and general clearing up. Afterwards a dance may be organised in our own or a neighbour's house, when the party will not break up till far into Boxing Day. The Christmas of 1901 being heralded by almost unprecedentedly mild weather, I decided, with one of my sons as driver, to visit two members of my family who had settled on a ranche in the wilds north of Yorkton, and more than one hundred and twenty miles by the trail from home. In the dim morning twilight two days before Christmas we packed a light but roomy cutter with plenty of the season's fare, and with a team equal to fifty miles a day, wrapped in fur coats and with buffalo robes galore in case of a change of atmosphere, we started.

The first part of our journey lay through an Indian reservation, where the huts and teepees of the Red man being completely covered and blocked in with snow, we saw no sign of life but the whirling round us of flocks of snow-birds and the numerous prairie chickens which flew up under our horses' feet. Having dined at the hospitable house of a settler on the banks of the Qu'Appelle River, we crossed on the ice, and spent the first night at the stopping-house of a half-breed a few miles beyond its north bank. The next day we bore north-west over a sand plain so barren as to be quite devoid of settlers; here we had to make a detour to avoid a band of wild horses which are apt to attack teams, and for which we had the rifle always ready. In consequence our second night was spent in Yorkton, and it was not till noon on Christmas Day that we came in sight of our final goal. The air was particularly fine and transparent even for the "North-West," and long before reaching it we were aware that our friends were

engaged in pitching out of doors their most cumbrous articles of furniture.

After the first greetings had been exchanged, we wished them "A Merry Christmas."

"Ah!" they exclaimed, "Christmas Day, is it? The almanac got torn, and we never see any one; but we got a warning that a dance was to be had here to-night, and we're clearing up for it."

'VERNA.'

### II

#### In Canada

HAVE you ever heard of Muskoka? It is scarcely likely unless, during the last five or six years, you have spent some time on the North American continent. We Canadians are proud to boast that Muskoka is our very own property, and that it is known not only to every Canadian, but all through the United States, from New Orleans to the State of Maine. On the continent here there is a malady known as Muskoka fever, which means that all who have once placed foot in that northern paradise become enamoured, and rave about its glories for the balance of their days.

It was in this far northern section that I spent my last Christmas holiday. Perhaps you can understand the extraordinary interest attached to the above assertion when I tell you that no railway train has ever broken through the rugged woods of Muskoka—no unmusical steam-whistle has as yet brought discord amongst those glorious pines, and dispelled the mysterious charm of the woodland echo, the ever-singing birds, and the running streams.

In the summer season the tourist is carried to his destination on the Muskoka lakes in a steam-boat, skiff, or canoe, according to the distance he goes and the amount of time at his disposal. Occasionally a party of young men will cover two or three hundred miles altogether in canoes.

I could talk to you for hours about the glory of this summer northland, where the waters of the fairy lakes are coal-black from the minerals deposited therein; where the thousands of small islands lie on the face of the waters like green spots dropped from heaven; where the shadows in the waters are so deep and true as to dazzle one's eyes and cause one to wonder whether the earth on which he stands is the shadow-land, and the shadow-land the substance, or *vice versa*. He usually concludes his meditations by rubbing his eyes and deciding that the whole thing is fairy-land, when usually a bird in a neighbouring tree will flutter and chirrup, causing the meditator to turn with a start, expecting to see a band of fairies proclaiming sovereignty over the land on which he stands.

But now, at the Christmas season, everything is changed. Though all but deserted, the country has still a charm peculiar to itself. I arrived on the borderland of the lower Muskoka lake two nights before Christmas. Here, at Gravenhurst, a sledge drawn by four sturdy horses was awaiting me, with my uncle's hired

## How I Spent Christmas

man, Indian Joe (who, by the way, is a full-blooded Iroquois Indian) on the front seat. With him was my eldest cousin, a lad of sixteen, and the only child of six who had ever seen a street or heard the whistle of a locomotive. It was three o'clock in the afternoon when we started across the frozen lake for Beaumaurice, where we were to spend the night, and press on to Onawanta, my uncle's home, in the morning. It was impossible to do the whole distance in one day, for Onawanta was seventy miles from our starting-point, and our horses found the glassy surface of the lakes vastly different from a country road. After spending a regular Muskoka night at Beaumaurice (I mean by this a night of the most refreshing sleep, which is experienced by all dwellers in Muskoka, caused by the soothing and health-giving properties of the Muskoka pines), we started at dawn for the north, crossing a lake the depth of which no man has yet fathomed. When the golden sun was setting behind the snow-topped trees, we neared Onawanta. My aunt and her eldest daughter met us a short distance down the lake, clad in huge raccoon coats and with enormous snow-shoes strapped on their feet. Furthermore, they both wore strange nose-protectors, which gave their faces an amusing expression.

Christmas Eve in the wilderness! As I stood in the large roomy parlour after supper, gazing into the hickory-log fire and then at the cheery room, with its floors covered with bearskins of animals found in the immediate vicinity, when looking about I felt the strong home atmosphere. I could not but think that Christmas is Christmas, no matter where circumstance may place man, provided he has the spirit of the holy festival within his heart. We spent the evening quietly, and beginning at the beginning, I told my relatives all that had happened recently in civilisation so far removed from them. As I talked, my youngest cousin curled herself up in a kitten-like position on the hearth-rug, and tenderly fondled a small cub-bear. When I had finished my tale my uncle sighed, and turning to me, said in astonishment, "What news! What happenings! The last we heard was from a lumberman who passed through in October. The good news you have told us, my boy, is better than the Christmas gift of a millionaire; and as for the bad news, that of wickednesses committed, it only goes to show us that the calm life of him who is far removed from all that tends to wrong has its advantages. We are all weak—we are all human—who knows but we might be even as those poor unfortunates whom temptation hath overcome!"

When the children had been put to bed we began to decorate the low-ceilinged rooms with pine branches and English holly carried a long distance for the purpose. Then we filled the home-knitted stockings with all manner of good things, and I assure you they had the advantage of city stockings, for they stretched amazingly, and seemed willing to welcome whatsoever amount was thrust within them. It was without doubt the pleasantest Christmas Eve I had

ever spent. The wind whistled wildly without, but within everything was warmth, happiness, and contentment. We could hear the swaying and creaking of the ancient pines, and from away in the distance would occasionally come a sound which would cause my uncle to look meaningfully at Indian Joe, who was assisting us; whereupon Joe would slip quietly away to the barns to see that everything was secure and the cattle well protected from wandering bears. Christmas morning we rose early, and after breakfast gathered in the parlour for service, which my uncle read; later our little band joined in singing Christmas carols, while aunt Louisa played the squeaky harmonium, and Mary, the hired girl, stood with open mouth, staring at our choir. Our dinner was no modern concoction. First we had canned chicken soup (which I had carried up in my box). Then roast venison and an imported turkey, the winters in Muskoka being too severe to allow of fowl being raised. Last of all came one of aunt Louisa's own famous puddings and mince-pie, which, as little Jack said, "tasted like pie made in a fairy palace by the hands of a fairy queen," which in truth it was. In the afternoon Joe hitched up the horses, and the whole family (Mary and Indian Joe included) drove through the heavy drifts to the Indian Home. It was a long, cold drive, but we were well repaid when we saw the eager, happy faces of the little brown-skinned children. We were the first strangers they had seen since early in September. Hidden away in our sleigh was a trifling present for each child—trifles my uncle and aunt had been collecting since the year before. Then there were remembrances for each of the good young women who had given their lives and left all they loved to work amongst the natives in the far north. When I thought of the feasting, and in many cases the waste, the dissatisfaction and *ennui* of the dwellers amongst plenty; and when I looked into those happy, unselfish, contented faces, I involuntarily exclaimed, "Virtue indeed is its own reward!" . . . We sang songs and played games, after my aunt, in simple, child-like words, told the children the story of the Holy Child and the First Christmas Morn. Before our departure my uncle announced a great treat for the following week. Joe was to drive over with one sleigh and he with the other, and bring the children over to spend New Year's at the farm. I have often thought since how I should have liked to have photographed those children and teachers as they stood listening to the invitation! It was one of the lost opportunities of my life. It was supper-time when we reached home. Afterwards we gathered about the fire, and talked until the sandman came, and brought drowsiness with him. As I crept to bed I felt as I had never felt before, that something true and tangible was hidden in the words—

"Count that day lost whose low descending sun  
Views from thy hand no worthy action done."

FRANCIS GWYNNE.

## How I Spent Christmas

### III

#### In New Zealand

**I**N the first instance this event is quite different in many respects out here from what it is in the Old Country.

Whilst we read the cablegrams in our newspapers about heavy snowstorms in England, trains snowed up, and of severe frost accompanied with the ideal pleasure of skating; and then turn around and look at the climatic conditions of our own colony at this time of the year, the contrast is startling, more especially if you have not been long settled here, for the weather is an ideal English summer's day, sun shining brightly, flowers in full bloom, fruit nearly ripe, and the ladies in all the latest and lightest of summer attire.

But there are always exceptions to the general rule, and this Christmas was one of them, for the day dawned very dark, and every appearance of rain, accompanied by gusts of wind now and then.

But this did not prevent any of those who were on pleasure bent from venturing forth; I myself had decided to join an excursion from the church with which I am connected.

On arriving at the starting-point each one asked the other, Did he or she, as the case might be, think it would rain? However, "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and each one hoped for the best.

Our destination was Nihotupu, a bush settlement about twenty miles distance from Auckland. Provisions and all cooking utensils were quickly placed aboard the wagonettes, and at 7.30 A.M. we were off on our four hours' drive. The suburbs are quickly reached, with all their charming houses, pretty gardens aglow with flowers, creepers winding in and out of the rails and supports of the verandahs—for all houses are built of wood, supported on piles of timber some few feet from the ground to keep off dampness and insects. The reason wood is used almost exclusively is chiefly due to the earthquakes which we suffer from now and then, and would be disastrous to a house if built of brick or stone.

Every one is in the best of spirits, and is quick to point out any fresh object of interest that we pass. A few stray Maoris on horseback, evidently on a visit to some friends or to some distant "tangi," are met. I may here explain the meaning of this latter word.

When a Maori dies, a feast, followed by dancing, is generally held. If the deceased person happens to be a chief or ex-king, the affair is a very big one, often lasting for a fortnight, when hundreds of the race come from all parts to participate in the ceremony; dried shark is eaten pretty extensively, and is considered quite a delicacy; however, tastes differ. This is followed by a variety of dances being performed, which to a person seeing them for the first time are very weird, graceful, and extremely interesting. All the greenstone ornaments, mats, tomahawks, etc., are either buried

with the corpse or burnt, and it is very seldom that any escape; consequently these carvings, mats, and greenstone are getting rarer every year, as the Maori now-a-days does not go in for such elaborate works of art as his ancestors did.

After a while the bush gets thicker on all sides, and the road is a trifle uneven, but it is now that the real grandeur of New Zealand lies before you, especially as you pass over bridges and view the different varieties of ferns, for which this colony holds the premier position. The most well-known varieties are the punga-punga and the nikan; the former one is the most important.

We reached our destination about twelve o'clock, and promptly made our way into the bush with all our provisions, etc.; a fire was soon alight with all the timber lying about, a large billy (or pan) was soon on the fire filled with water, in which, as soon as it boiled, we placed the tea, which was sewn up in muslin bags. Table-cloths were soon spread out on the grass, tinned meat and fruit opened, sandwiches, cakes, scones, etc., were quickly brought out, and we all fell to and did full and ample justice to the same. Just after we had finished lunch and were starting to wash up, the rain came down pretty heavily; however, this did not damp our spirits one bit, though I cannot say the same of our clothes and boots. One half of us went to see the Falls of Nihotupu, which are really splendid, one of them being seventy-five feet high and surrounded by beautiful ferns and a charming landscape.

The other half of us went off into the bush, which is the charm of New Zealand. It is here that you see some of the most magnificent timber in the world, the kauri being the king of all, followed by the niho, kateapakitea, pohutukawa or Christmas tree, as it flowers just at this time, bearing a red flower something like a chrysanthemum. Another tree is the rata, which at first commences as a vine, selecting a kauri tree to climb around; ultimately it kills it, and from then becomes a tree on its own account, having got all its nourishment from the kauri.

The principal birds are the lui or parson-bird, so called on account of the little white tuft it has on its black throat; the fantail, on account of its tail when spread out resembling a fan, and the kiwi, but this bird is becoming more rare every year.

We wandered about until four o'clock, when the rain had stopped, and then made tea, but everything was so wet that we had all to stand up and could not take our luxurious ease on the ground. After this we quickly packed up, and by five o'clock we were in our wagonettes again back to Auckland. Songs were freely indulged in, though I don't think there were any future operatic stars amongst us; but we enjoyed ourselves, reaching the city about 8.30 P.M., after a most happy outing. Though different in many respects from a Christmas spent in the Old Country, still a colonial one has its own charms.

JOHN BUSTARD.

# Window-box Gardening

BY A WOMAN WORKER

## IV

**F**OR Spring bloom, single and double coloured Primroses are both effective and cheerful, and as long as the weather remains open they may be safely planted, though it is an advantage to have them accustomed to the "move" before a sharp or long frost comes in.

In the single Hybrid class (*Primulis Acaulis*), charming combinations of colour may be arranged, such as a background of "Miss Massey" (crimson), with the front row of "Virginia" (large pure white).

For a sheltered window-box, sunny, yet without any fear of harsh winds, either Wilson's Blue Primrose, or *Acaulis Colrulea*, alone, or with plants of single white, are very effective. They are, however, expensive, ranging from 9d. to 1s. 6d. per plant; but some of the cheaper varieties give wonderfully good results. Amongst these the single Lilac Primrose is a charming variety, and alone or with white and any good yellow, such as Single Sulphur, the common English Primrose, or yellow Hose in Hose, with its petaloid calyx, or flower upon flower, is both interesting and effective.

Where expense is no object a box filled with Jack in the Green (*Officinalis Macroclyx*), 1s. per plant, would be well worth trying, the bright crimson flower, surrounded by its green calyx, being suggestive of warmth and colour.

"Sparkler," a crimson Hose in Hose, has also this property, and a box of this variety alone would satisfy any lover of colour.

Some of the double varieties (*Primula Acaulis*, *Flora Plena*) are very good value for window-box gardening. Double white (*Acaulis Alba*, *Fl. Pl.*) associates well with either the ordinary yellow Hose in Hose, "Lady Dora" Hose in Hose (a deep yellow), "Sparkler" (scarlet crimson) Hose in Hose, single lilac, double lilac, or with Marie Croussei, a beautiful purplish-pink double primrose with silver edge.

Again, there are few combinations or arrangements of colour amongst these charming plants that will give more pleasure to the many than a box or number of pots filled entirely with the ordinary yellow primrose, which has the charm of association as well as of colour.

These can be obtained by the hundred at a very moderate price from Devonshire, Surrey, and many parts of Ireland; 5s. would in all probability buy 100, including postage, and they are to be had direct from any good nursery at 12s. per 100.

These plants like good soil previously enriched with well-rotted manure, or, as they thrive splendidly in deep decayed leaf-mould, one can never go wrong in giving them, when in cultivation, what they surround themselves with when left untouched by the hand of man.

One point cultivators should note, and that is, that this class of plants has a fashion of pushing itself out of the ground and leaving roots and rootlets exposed, much to their disadvantage. The remedy for this is very firm planting, with an occasional look round (especially after frost), when any plant thus misplaced may be put back to mother earth and very firmly pressed in.

### ERICAS (HARDY HEATHER)

are very good value during the winter months. A few pots of these arranged alternately with nice little bushy Thuyas, Cupressus, or Veronicas, which may be purchased for 6d. each, will keep the window bright and gay.

### FOR SUNLESS WINDOWS

Azalea Mollis is very decorative and satisfactory; they can be procured in mixed varieties at 2s. per plant, and the stock increased by striking cuttings in a pot of sandy soil; cover with a bell glass, or inverted soda-water glass, and keep in a warm room till the cuttings have rooted. March is the best time to take the cuttings, and the plants may either be purchased in the pots or removed to them in the late autumn.

These plants are often sold by auction at a very low price, when Dutch and other bulb sales are being held.

Another plant valuable for shaded places, and so hardy that nothing seems to kill it, is Hypericum (St. John's Wort, or Rose of Sharon); it may be planted during the autumn or winter, in ordinary soil, and propagated by division of roots in April or October.

Hypericum Calycanum, price 6d. per plant, is a good variety to grow in window-boxes.

In February those who have to furnish boxes for north-facing windows should procure plants, or root cuttings, of *Tropæolum Speciosum* (price 9d. each); it prefers a light alluvial soil, grows rapidly, is at all times graceful and ornamental, and in autumn is brilliant with glowing scarlet flowers.

Bulbs for Spring flowering will no doubt have been planted according to directions in No. 1 and No. 2 of these papers, but it may comfort those who have not been able to get them in before the proverbially correct time (Lord Mayor's Day), to know that the results are good (if tardy) when planted much later. One lady of my acquaintance boasts that she always waits till the bulbs are being sold at clearance prices, and then "smuggles them in," and never finds they are much behind those of her neighbours.

Where crocus bulbs are being put in, a



## Window-box Gardening

mixture of autumn, winter, and spring varieties is very desirable; the price is not prohibitive where so few are required, and a window-box containing *Daphne Cucorum* (say two shrubs) and such crocus bulbs as *Biflorus White*, *Biflorus Argenteus*, *Aureus Pallidus*, and *Aureas Striatus* will be bright and cheerful for a long time.

The great foe of successful window gardening during the winter months is frost. Those who do not grudge a little trouble and are in the habit of "mothering" their plants may guard

them by covering them during frosty nights with a few folds of newspaper; watering the leaves after a frost, *before* the sun is on them, may prevent damage being done. I have found that a "blanket," in the shape of a shovelful of ashes, over the roots carries many a tender plant through severe weather, and such a covering is invaluable for bulbs.

Another rule to observe during frosty weather is, *never* water in the evening, and only sparingly at any time except in mild, open weather.

## Over-Sea Notes

### *From Our Own Correspondents*

#### Mohammedan Emigration from Russia

THE large Mohammedan population settled in the Crimea and elsewhere along the shores of the Black Sea are apparently packing up their belongings and departing for Turkey and Asia Minor. The Crimea, once a Tartar Khanate, is rapidly being cleared of Musulmans. The Tartar population is being forced out by incoming Russian and German colonists. They are no longer able to exist in face of the keen competition around them, and in consequence they are leaving in hundreds for the Sultan's dominions, where they hope for a quieter existence. Every ship leaving Crimean ports takes away a number of these stranded disciples of Islam. The same compelling force is at work among the Circassian Mohammedans inhabiting the beautiful eastern shores of the Black Sea. Russian settlers are coming down south from the congested central provinces, and are taking over the fruitful lands once owned by these Circassian tribes. Fruits, tobacco, tea, are now being grown extensively here, and the Circassians who were only hunters or woodsmen are forced to retire to Asia Minor. It was among their villages that the Turks used to make their famous raids to supply the harems and slave-markets of the Levant. These villages are now being gradually occupied by Russian planters, and the thick woods which once rendered the coast so malarious are being cut down to make way for orchards and tobacco-fields.—M. A. M.

#### The Cape Colony Guano Islands

THE products of South Africa, which are exported, are neither numerous nor varied. The

South African colonies import almost everything required by the white inhabitants. Meat, butter, and flour are imported, as well as machinery, building materials, and all articles of clothing and house furnishing. Ship after ship, and steamer after steamer come into port fully laden with coal, lumber, and miscellaneous cargoes; and each in turn leaves the South African coast in ballast. Except for wool and hides, there are no bulky freights to send to Europe or America; for the gold, ostrich feathers, and diamonds, which form the chief wealth of South Africa, are not calculated to make very full cargoes, and are carried almost exclusively by the mail boats. The Government of Cape Colony has, however, one small resource of a peculiar kind. About fifty miles from Cape Town, on the west coast, near Saldanha Bay, there is a small group of islands known as the Guano Islands. These belong to the Government and yield a yearly harvest, which is due to the enormous swarms of sea-birds that frequent them. The birds are of many species, largely of the gull kind; but the most important are the malagas or geese, and the penguins. Besides the guano, the penguins yield another crop to the Cape Colony Government. The penguin, which is one of the least bird-like of all birds, makes a burrow in the sand for its nest, and lays a number of eggs which are large and of a very pure, translucent whiteness. These eggs are highly esteemed by the native population of Cape Town. In 1901 the Government realised £1673 15s. by the sale of penguin eggs from the Guano Islands, and under the careful management of the Government, it was possible to take so enormous a quantity of eggs without risk of exterminating the penguins or even unduly diminishing their

## Over-Sea Notes

number. The Guano Islands are also frequented by seals, and in 1901 the number of seals killed on the islands was 3246, the Government realising £2745 for their skins. In regard to the guano, the Government gives a preference to local demands, and none is exported until the wants of the Colony are supplied. In 1901 the supply was short, and the whole amount of 2750 tons was sold locally at about £6 10s. a ton. In ordinary seasons there is usually a large surplus for export, and for the exported guano the Government secures a better price. In catering first for the local demand, the Government is acting in the interest of Cape Colony agriculture, it being of prime importance to develop and improve the productive capabilities of the Colony, with a view to reducing the amount of produce which has to be imported from abroad.—A. G. P.

### Sight-seeing by Trolley-Cars

ELECTRIC tramcars—or trolley-cars, as they are called in the United States—have had a remarkable history. Fifteen years ago they were a novelty to be found in but few cities. To-day every city and town of considerable size has its trolley line, and thousands of sparsely-settled communities as well are thus connected with each other and with large cities. At first the trolley-car was used chiefly for business purposes, but in recent years it has become an important source of recreation for people in poor and moderate circumstances. The electric railway companies throughout the country have developed this function of the trolley-car by establishing on the outskirts of large cities numerous parks with popular attractions of various kinds. These parks are connected with the cities by electric lines, and passengers are conveyed to and fro at nominal prices. In most cases no charge of admission is made at the park, the railway company calculating to gain its profits from the fares collected on the cars and from the receipts of the refreshment-stands and other "extras" at the park. Another recent development of the trolley system is its use by tourists. In at least six cities of the United States observation-cars are operated over routes selected especially for the tourist. The company which provides this service makes special arrangements with the existing railway companies in the various cities so that it can run cars over many more interesting streets than any ordinary line is apt to cover. Each observation-car is provided with a guide who, megaphone in hand, stands at the

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OBSERVATION ELECTRIC CAR, DENVER, COL.

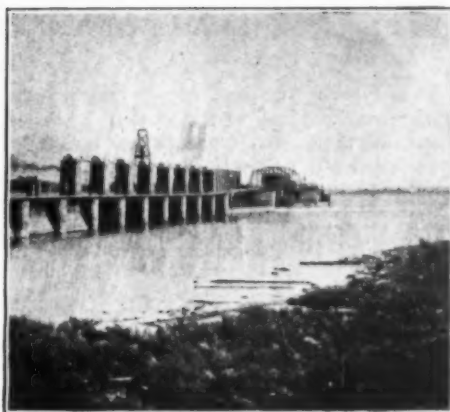
forward end and explains the points of interest on the route. The mileage covered in these trips and the price of the tickets vary in different cities. In Denver, Colorado, some twenty-five miles are traversed, and the charge is twenty-five cents. In Los Angeles, California; Charleston, S.C.; Washington, D.C.; Boston, Mass.; and Salt Lake City, Utah, it is fifty cents. In winter closed cars are used, which are heated by electricity. The time required for each trip is about two hours.

A. B. R.

### The Chicago Drainage Canal

IN 1893 the city of Chicago was engaged in two projects of enormous magnitude. One of these was the World's Columbian Exposition, in celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. The other was the Chicago drainage canal, which the city began to dig the previous year, 1892. The great interest aroused by the Exposition eclipsed for a time the interest taken in the canal, but now that the "Fair" is a matter of history and most of its buildings are levelled to the ground, the drainage canal stands out as an achievement no less remarkable than the Columbian Exposition. Ever since Chicago became a city of considerable size, its drainage problem has been a difficult one. The Chicago River, a small, sluggish stream which empties into Lake Michigan, was early utilised to carry off the sewerage, but as the city grew in population, the pollution of the water became offensive. Before the completion of the drainage canal, it was so bad that boats pushing through the putrid river continually stirred up foul odours, and epidemics were frequent. Chicago's drinking-water was also affected. The mouths of

the intaking pipes, drawing water from Lake Michigan, were found to be too near the outlet of the river, and intake tunnels three and four miles long had to be constructed to prevent contamination. The Chicago drainage canal, which was completed in 1900 at a cost of \$33,000,000 (£6,600,000), has relieved the congested condition of the Chicago River by making it flow backwards, thus freeing the water-supply from danger of contamination. Instead of receiving the waters of the Chicago River, Lake Michigan is now made the source of the river, supplying every minute thousands of cubic feet of water, which are carried through the Chicago River into the canal and thence to the Des Plaines, Illinois and Mississippi rivers. It will be seen, therefore, that the canal connects the Chicago and Des Plaines rivers, running a distance of 28½ miles. Though not the longest, it is said to be the largest purely artificial canal in the world. About two-thirds of its length it is cut through solid limestone, the remaining distance being through gravel. A minimum width of 160 feet is maintained through the rock-cut portion, while the rest of the canal is much wider. The depth of the canal ranges from 22 to 30 feet. At Lockport, where the canal empties into the Des Plaines River, a large dam has been constructed, whose gates, operated by hydraulic pressure, remove water simultaneously from the surface and



RETAINING LOCKS OF THE CHICAGO DRAINAGE CANAL, LOCKPORT, ILL.

bottom of the canal. In this way all accumulation of putrid matter which might otherwise form at the gates is avoided. The speed of the current in the canal, and consequently in the Chicago River, is also regulated by these gates. A telephone line connects Chicago with the dam at Lockport, so that the volume of water flowing out of the canal may be reduced or increased immediately upon order of the city.

At present the gates of the dam allow about 250,000 cubic feet of water to flow from the canal, but provision is made for a maximum of 600,000 feet per minute. The additional volume of water which was poured into the Des Plaines River by the drainage canal necessitated much reinforcement along the banks of that stream, and while the work was being carried out, the river had to be diverted from its course for thirteen miles. Before its completion two serious objections were raised to the drainage canal. It was said, on one hand, that withdrawing so much water from Lake Michigan as the canal projectors contemplated would lower the level of that body of water so much that the harbours of all the towns on its shores would be ruined. On the other hand, St. Louis, a city on the Mississippi, about 375 miles below Chicago, objected that the sewerage from the drainage canal would make her water-supply utterly useless. Neither of these objections seems to have been sustained by the actual results. The level of Lake Michigan is, for all practical purposes, the same as before, while the water of St. Louis appears not to have suffered from Chicago's sewerage, since the rivers have ample opportunity to clear themselves in the distance between the cities.—A. B. R.



CHICAGO DRAINAGE CANAL

## Over-Sea Notes

### The Passing of the American Cow-boy

THE typical American cow-boy is rapidly passing away. Many of the western plains of the United States which, twenty-five years ago, were dotted with the picturesque figures of the cow-boys are now fenced in the manner of eastern farms, and the tourist who travels over the continent to-day in a through train is fortunate if he catches a close view of a single group of real cow-boys "of the old school." This change is to be attributed to several factors, among the chief of which are the replacement of public by private ownership of land and the introduction of the wire fence. Western ranch lands have passed, or are passing, through three distinct stages. In the first of these the land is owned by the Government, and the cattle-men graze their stock along with the cattle of their neighbours on the public land. Under such conditions the old-fashioned cow-boy was a necessity, and consequently flourished. It was his business to look after his master's cattle wherever they might be on the "range lands," and at the "round-up" to "cut out" from the common herd all cattle bearing his master's brand. In the second stage through which ranch lands pass, an individual buys his own grazing territory and prohibits his neighbour's cattle from encroaching on his boundaries. Here again cow-boys are necessary to patrol the boundaries, prevent stampedes, etc. Finally, the individual owners fence their lands, a procedure made possible by the invention and introduction of barb-wire. In this stage the function of the cow-boy is reduced to that of any farm hand, and the ranch itself is managed in about the same way as a stock-farm of the east. All western land has not yet passed through this evolution, and lands in the first, second, and third stages may be found in the same state. Ultimately, however, all ranch land will be fenced, and the cow-boy will become a farm hand.—A. B. R.

### The Vatican and the Philippines

THE situation of the Vatican in the Philippines is daily becoming more grave, owing to the hostility of the natives to the Congregations, which represent in their eyes the instrument of

Spanish despotism, to the animosity existing between the native and foreign clergy, and finally to the invasion of American Protestant propagandists, especially Methodists, who have already gained considerable ground among the people. Cardinal Rampolla now begins to see what a mistake it was not to come to an understanding with Governor Taft, who came to Rome and submitted most liberal propositions to the Holy See, which, if accepted, would have assured to the Catholic Church the benevolent attitude of the civil government in the islands, while now she is experiencing what much resembles an unfriendly neutrality. What was unexpected to the Vatican was the frankness of the Americans, which they suspected concealed a trap, as, according to their traditional system, diplomatic negotiations are not made to come to an honest agreement in the interests of both parties, but to fight a duel of astuteness so that ultimately one may outwit the other. The consequence has been that the Filipinos understood that the Holy See was not willing to disavow the ancient *régime* of tyranny and darkness against which they had fought, and a schism has already been started against the Church of Rome, to which a section of the native clergy has adhered, and which may have serious consequences. All this has hastened the departure for Manila of Monsignor Guidi, the new Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, who hopes to arrive in time to stop the desertions from Rome, and has instructions to accept the propositions of the civil government regarding the purchase of the friars' lands, and the indemnity from the United States for damage to ecclesiastical buildings during the war, which would, roughly, bring in about £2,000,000. With such a considerable sum the Vatican hopes to be able to start an influx of the religious orders which have been obliged to abandon France, Spain, and Portugal, and which, they think, would find there new life, while awaiting more propitious times in Europe. Monsignor Guidi is also instructed to neutralise the efforts of the American Methodists, the most dreaded invaders, and to obtain that Roman Catholic teaching should be allowed in the public schools, on the ground that the population being entirely Roman Catholic, the suppression of it would be an attempt against, not a protection of, freedom of creed.—S. C.





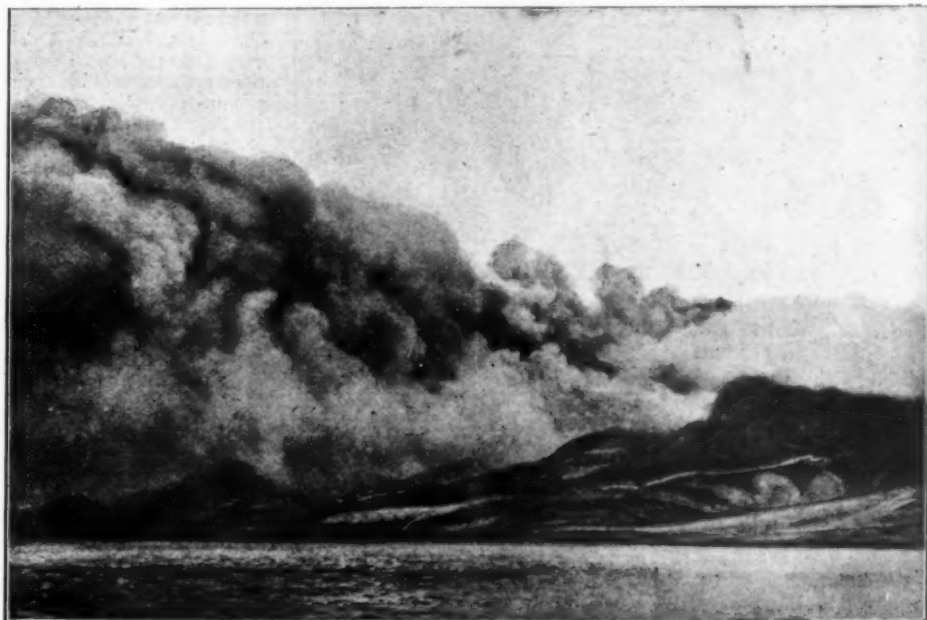
# Science and Discovery

BY PROFESSOR R. A. GREGORY, F.R.A.S.

## Scientific Aspects of the West Indian Volcanic Eruptions

THE terrible disaster in Martinique last May, when St. Pierre and its thirty thousand inhabitants were annihilated in a few minutes, was an event of such an awe-inspiring character that it is difficult even now to refer to it without emotion. The human mind shrinks before the awful power of Nature manifested by an eruption like that of Mont Pelée, and it seems almost

it does not prevent the man of science from inquiring into their causes. With this object he accumulates exact observations and studies their relationship with those of other times in the hope that knowledge will be obtained which will prove of service to the human race. As physicians study disease, so do naturalists inquire into the disorders to which Nature is subject. Both may be moved by sympathy for the sufferers, but a sense of responsibility urges them to make a complete diagnosis, and to state



MONT PELÉE IN ERUPTION

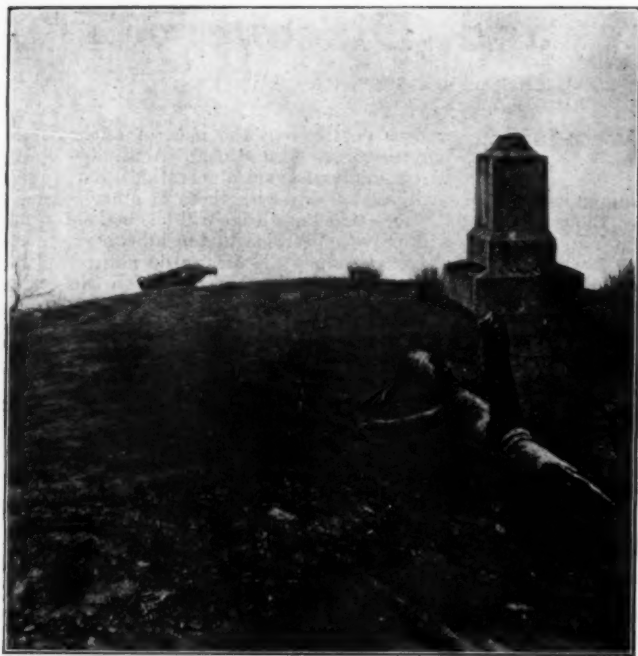
*Photo by Dr. Tempest Anderson*

a sacrilege to attempt to analyse its character. The feeling is a natural one ; for there are times when the spirit of inquiry refuses to act, when man loses his pride of knowledge, and his soul trembles before the majesty of the forces around him. He may resist the thought of fear if his will is strong enough, but he cannot overcome it when lightnings flash and thunders roar, or he is tossed about by the waves of a heavy sea, or a storm shakes the walls of his dwelling. And when volcanoes breathe out their burning blasts, or the solid earth shivers, even the disciplined philosopher finds it difficult to remain calm.

But though the contemplation of uncommon effects in Nature inspires a spirit of reverence,

so far as they are able the meaning of the symptoms.

Two scientific reports which have recently been published upon the eruptions of Mont Pelée in Martinique and the Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent take account of the events purely from the point of view of the natural philosopher. One contains the results of observations of a party sent to the scene of the eruptions by the National Geographic Society of Washington, and another is the preliminary report of Dr. Tempest Anderson and Dr. J. S. Flett to the Royal Society. The humanitarian aspects of the catastrophe have already been placed before the world, and need not be described here, be the temptation to dwell upon them never so



STATUE OF OUR LADY OF THE WATCH, SOUTH END OF ST. PIERRE

This Statue, weighing several tons, was thrown to a distance of about fifty feet

strong. There are, however, so many matters of scientific significance in the reports referred to, from which the accompanying illustrations have been reproduced, that a short account of some of them claims attention.

vapours, and only to a small extent are they made up of smoke like that from a furnace.

When the news of the eruption of Mont Pelée was first published, it was stated that a sheet of flame issued from the volcano and enveloped

Before stating the results of the investigations made by the two parties, it is worth while to remark that many existing ideas concerning volcanoes require correction. A few years ago a volcano was defined as "A burning mountain which gives forth fire and smoke," but nearly every word of this statement is incorrect. A volcano is not necessarily a mountain, but a crack or hole from which heated material from the earth's interior is ejected; it does not burn in the ordinary sense of combustion, or it would burn away like a heap of wood or coal; it emits very little flame and smoke, the appearance of fire being produced by the reflection of the light of the incandescent rock in the crater upon the clouds of steam which hang over it—the effect being precisely similar to the illumination of the steam from the funnel of a locomotive when the door of the fire-box is opened. Practically, all the clouds which are formed during an eruption consist of steam and other gases and

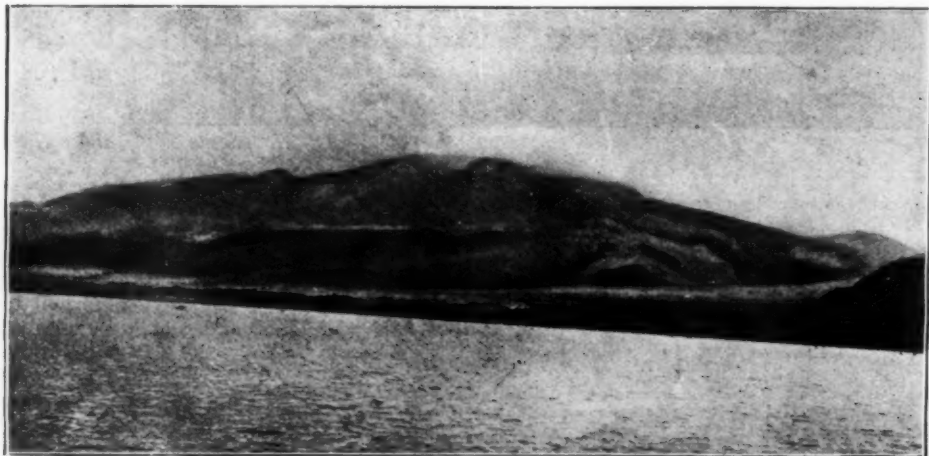


Photo by Israel C. Russell

MONT PELÉE AND THE DESTROYED NORTH END OF ST. PIERRE

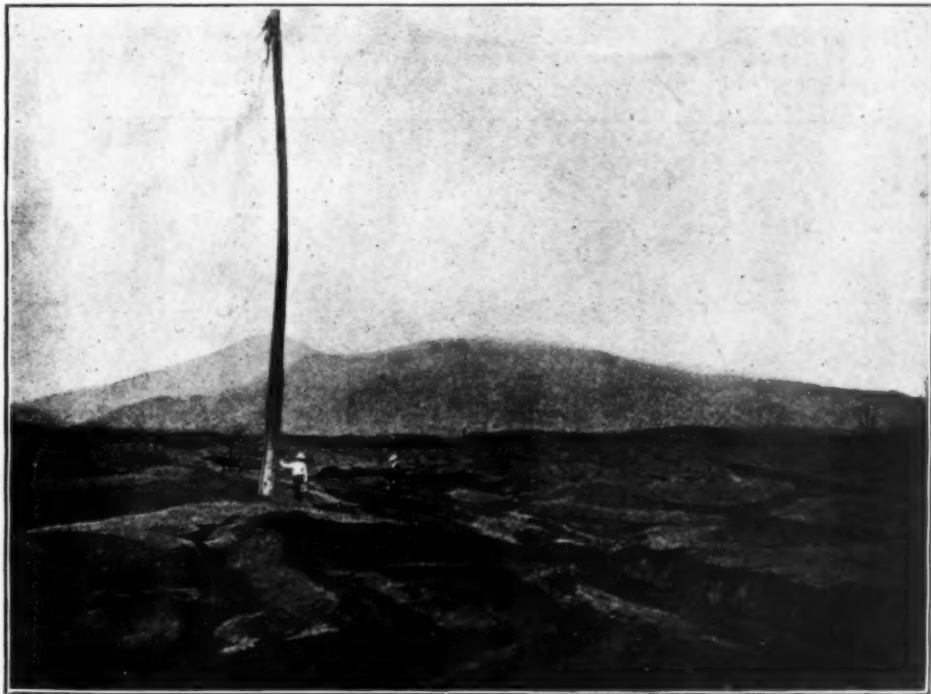
Within this area of about twenty miles practically everything was destroyed

St. Pierre in its fiery embrace. The reports now available show that this was not the case. From the evidence of witnesses of the eruptions it appears that both in the case of Mont Pelée and the Soufrière of St. Vincent a dense, black cloud rolled with terrific violence down the volcanoes and blasted everything in its path. This cloud consisted of superheated steam, intensely hot gases, and volcanic dust almost in a state of incandescence. Imagine a stream of molten iron blown into dust by an explosion of steam within it, and you obtain an idea of the character of the blast sent out by these volcanoes. Whatever was touched by this incandescent avalanche was set afire or scorched. There was no burning in the cloud itself, but the gases and dust were so intensely hot that all combustible materials over which they passed were ignited in a moment, so that it seemed as if the cloud itself was a flame.

The terrific strength of the fiery hurricane belched forth from the volcanoes, and travelling at the rate of about a mile a minute, is shown by its effects. At Martinique a statue of the Holy Virgin standing on a stone pedestal on the wooded cliff overlooking St. Pierre was swept off and carried to a distance of over forty-five feet. When found, it lay with its head pointing to the mountain, and the direction of the statue showed that the blast travelled straight from the crater to the city. Trees were uprooted, cannon were

overthrown, lighthouses were overturned, the projecting ironwork of the verandahs of the houses was twisted and bent, and ships riding in the harbour were capsized by the force of the blast. Nothing exposed to such a tornado of intensely hot dust and gases could withstand its fury.

The chief causes of death were scalds and burns inflicted by the superheated steam and the hot dust carried by the volcanic cloud. All the survivors of the catastrophe say they felt as if something was compressing their throats, and that the fine ash prevented them from swallowing. Their burns were chiefly on the outer aspects of the arms and legs and on their faces, and confined to parts not protected by their clothes. The occupants of a boat in the way of the cloud from the Soufrière dived into the hissing sea to escape the blast. When they returned to the surface the air was still suffocating, but they continued to dive again and again, and when at their last gasp they found that the air cleared, and they were able to breathe again. This occupied only a few minutes—probably much less in reality than it appeared to them. One man was too exhausted to continue diving; he clung to the gunwale of the boat, and the tops of his ears were severely scorched, thus showing how intensely heated the air was at some distance from the volcano.



*Photo by Israel C. Russell*

MUD-COVERED LANDSCAPE, WITH DENUED TRUNKS OF PALMS



*Photo by Israel C. Russell*

STEAM JETS IN A RIVER OF MUD, PRODUCED BY THE DUST FROM THE SOUFRIÈRE, ST. VINCENT

With the blast there was practically no noise of a great explosion, neither was there any strong evidence of earthquake shocks. Brilliant

displays of lightning within the clouds were seen both at St. Vincent and Martinique during the eruptions. The electricity of these

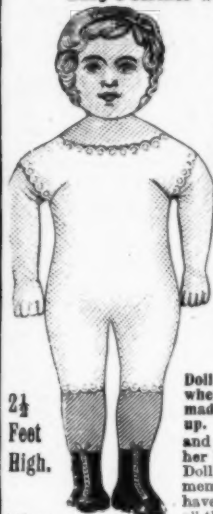


*Photo by Israel C. Russell*

THE DEVASTATED SLOPES OF THE SOUFRIÈRE, ST. VINCENT



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discharges was probably developed, as in other eruptions, by friction of the particles of dust against the sides of the crater and among themselves. No evidence was, however, found of death or destruction by lightning during the eruptions.

The amount of dust ejected must have been enormous. After the *Roddam* arrived at St. Lucia eight hours after the eruption, no fewer than one hundred and twenty tons of fine sand-like ash were removed from her decks, where it lay two or three feet deep in places. Around Georgetown, St. Vincent, the ash was deposited in depths from one to three feet, and dispersed among it were blocks so large as a foot in diameter. On some of the sugar-cane fields in the Carib country the ash was four feet deep, while on the higher slopes of the hill it was from three feet to more than twelve feet deep. The ash was evidently not merely rained down from above, but blown over the ground, giving rise to an appearance like that of a country covered with blown snow. The conclusion arrived at by Drs. Anderson and Flett was that in the case of the Soufrière eruption, immense quantities of hot sand rushed down the hill into the valleys in an avalanche which carried with it a terrific blast, and piled the ashes deep in the sheltered ravines, at the same time sweeping everything off the exposed ridges which lay between. After the blast had passed, a rain of volcanic material, lasting for several hours, covered the surface of the country, with a final sheet of fine dust and scoriae. In the case of the eruption of Mont Pelée, the total quantity of ash which fell in St. Pierre was less than one foot in thickness, but it also was piled highest against the walls facing the volcano.

The most striking characteristic of the late eruptions were the paroxysmal discharges of the incandescent ashes already described. There were no streams of lava, the material ejected from the volcanoes consisting of volcanic ash and blocks of pumice, together with some of the old crater material of previous eruptions in the case of Mont Pelée. Molten rock was not emitted in any form. No decided evidence of changes of level of land or seashore was found, the tide-marks on the rocks and the landing-stages at the villages showing practically the same level of high water as they did before the eruptions. It is possible, however, that submarine changes have occurred.

Some remarkable secondary effects of the eruption of the Soufrière of St. Vincent were seen in the Wallibu River. The water of this stream was displaced by the hot material ejected by the volcano, and there was a constant fight for mastery. It was estimated that the valley was filled to a depth of fifty or sixty feet with this hot volcanic matter, and through it the surface water attempted to work its way. The result was the production of immense quantities of steam, which, escaping from thousands of vents, formed at times white columns that rose hundreds of feet into the air. Dams were frequently formed across the river on account of the banks of soft ash being undermined; and when this

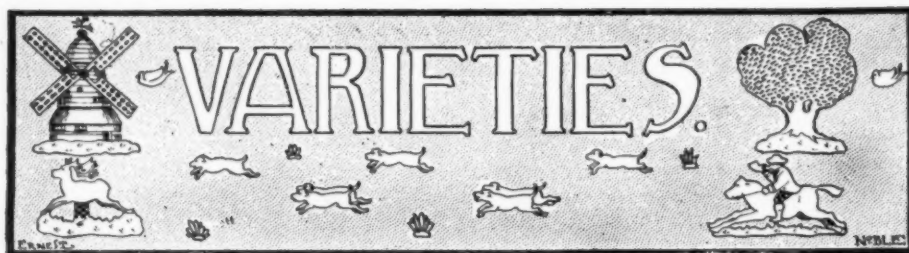
occurred steam was given off in enormous clouds as the hot ash fell into the water. After every landslip of this kind a column of muddy water rose to one or two hundred feet, carrying with it pieces of stone, giving rise to much the same appearance as a geyser. The flow of the river would be checked by the mass of ash, and for a time the bed below would be dry. But suddenly the dam would give way, and a large body of hot, steaming, black mud would rush down the dry channel and with a roar plunge into the sea. Several rivers were observed to be affected in a similar way, and these novel effects led to erroneous reports of lava flows and eruptions from new craters below the volcano.

No secondary craters were produced during the recent eruptions, and the configuration of the old craters was only slightly modified. The main crater of the Soufrière is about a mile in diameter, and there is no doubt that this was the outlet of practically all the material ejected during the late eruptions. On the north-east lip of the main crater is another crater about one-third of a mile in diameter, believed to have originated in the eruption of 1812, but it is doubtful whether this was active during the eruption. On Mont Pelée also no new craters were formed, but merely old ones re-opened. It appears that the fatal explosions which destroyed St. Pierre were not from the old crater, which is five miles from the city, but from a lower vent, similar in character to the Soufrière of St. Vincent.

In St. Vincent the mass of material ejected is stated in the Royal Society's report to have been much greater, and to have devastated a considerably larger area of country, than in Martinique. That the loss of life was not so great is accounted for by the absence of a populous city at the foot of the mountain. In other respects the two eruptions were of a precisely similar character, which is expressed by Drs. Anderson and Flett in the following concluding paragraph of their report:—

"The most peculiar feature of these eruptions is the avalanche of incandescent sand and the great black cloud which accompanies it. The preliminary stages of the eruption, which may occupy a few days or only a few hours, consists of outbursts of steam, fine dust, and stones, and the discharge of the crater lakes as torrents of water or of mud. In them there is nothing unusual, but as soon as the throat of the crater is thoroughly cleared, and the climax of the eruption is reached, a mass of incandescent lava rises and swells over the lip of the crater in the form of an avalanche of red-hot dust. It is a lava blown to pieces by the expansion of the gases it contains. It rushes down the slopes of the hill, carrying with it a terrific blast which mows down everything in its path."

This is a summary of the chief scientific lessons taught by the eruptions. Other facts have been established, such as the disturbance of magnetic needles thousands of miles away. Many speculative reasons have been given, and though they may be interesting it would be undesirable to deal with them in this record of observation and inference, concerning the eruptions which created the terrible catastrophe last May.



## Leisure

"It is the way in which hours of freedom are spent that determines, as much as war or as labour, the moral worth of a nation."

MAETERLINCK.

## "Who Stole the Donkey?"

A READER writes from Adelaide, South Australia, September 1902:—

"I heard this in 1829 in Saltash, Cornwall. I was at the school of Messrs. Haly and Roberts in that ancient borough. I remember it very distinctly, because my father had just then removed me to that school from Mylor near Falmouth, and it astonished me very much.

"Mobs of boys, too, used to run after a Jew, howling—

"'I had a piece of pork,

I stuck it on a fork,

And I gave it to the Jew! Jew! Jew!"

"I am afraid I used to join in these senseless howlings!"

## "Aunt Samuel"

GEORGE ELIOT, in a letter quoted by the Rev. William Mottram in this month's *Leisure Hour* (p. 120), speaks of "my Methodist aunt Samuel." This expression struck us as so peculiar that we wrote to Mr. Mottram about it.

He says, "It was used by George Eliot precisely as it stands. In this way in a private letter to a friend she elected to characterise Dinah Morris, who was the wife of her father's brother Samuel."

Can any of our readers give other instances of this usage of calling an aunt by her husband's Christian name?

## Is the Christmas Card Dying out?

SURELY not. The world would be a duller place without it. What would the children do, if they could not count up and compare their Christmas cards? And even for older people, the Christmas card presents itself as a pleasant way of sending a souvenir to friends.

Certainly the variety and beauty of these cards seem to increase every year. We have been favoured with some samples of those which

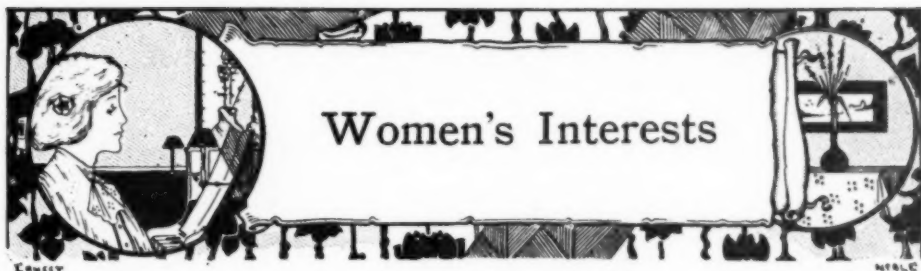
Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons have prepared—the very catalogue of them being a book of 250 pages. Among the most beautiful of this year's cards we note their "Royal Christmas Panels," with varied subjects; their new varieties of "Daily Block Calendars," wall Texts, and Christmas Postcards.

## Astronomical Notes for December

ON the 1st day of this month the Sun rises, in the latitude of Greenwich, at 7h. 45m. in the morning, and sets at 3h. 52m. in the evening; on the 11th he rises at 7h. 57m. and sets at 3h. 49m.; and on the 21st he rises at 8h. 5m. and sets at 3h. 51m. He will be vertical over the tropic of Capricorn at 7 o'clock on the evening of the 22nd, which is therefore the day of the winter solstice, when the days are at their shortest in the northern hemisphere and longest in the southern. The Moon enters her First Quarter at 6h. 27m. (Greenwich time) on the morning of the 8th; becomes Full at 3h. 47m. on that of the 15th; enters her Last Quarter at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 21st; and becomes New at 9h. 25m. on that of the 29th. She will be in apogee, or farthest from the Earth, about a quarter past 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 2nd; in perigee, or nearest us, about half-past 1 on that of the 15th; and in apogee again about a quarter before 7 o'clock on the evening of the 29th. Exceptionally high tides may be expected on the 15th. No eclipses or other special phenomena of importance are due this month. The planet Mercury will not be visible to the naked eye this month, being at superior conjunction with the Sun on the 12th. Venus will become visible for a short time after sunset towards the end of the month, situated in the constellation Sagittarius. Mars rises during the whole of this month between 11 and 12 o'clock at night; at first in the constellation Leo, he soon enters Virgo, and passes very near Beta and Eta Virginis (both stars of about the fourth magnitude) on the 9th and 26th respectively. Jupiter is in the eastern part of Capricornus and enters Aquarius at the end of the month, setting then about 7 o'clock in the evening. Saturn is still in Sagittarius, and will at the end of the month be at no great distance to the east of Venus, setting about an hour after her.

W. T. LYNN.





## Women's Interests

### Is England Losing the Use of Speech?

It is the fashion to indicate to-day that, as a people, we have begun to degenerate, that neither our minds, our muscles, our morals, nor our manners are what they were. This tendency, where it is sincere, and not merely a windy echo of other people's shouting, is an evidence of growth. We do not see our faults until we have risen a little way above them, and we cannot indicate what we observe without wishing that at least our neighbours would improve their usages.

The race is no less vocal than it was, and the average man has, in the last quarter of a century, added over a hundred words to his everyday vocabulary, with, possibly, corresponding enlargement of mental conception. (It may not be generally known that the unlettered man or woman transacts all the needful business of existence with a vocabulary of five hundred words, such words as "cloth" covering the entire range of materials from sacking to silk brocade, and "meat" every kind of food from acorns to *entremets* and *hors d'œuvres*.)

Regarding loss of lingual power there is no fear; the syllables poured out by tongue and pen never, in the history of this country, had anything like their present abundance. But if speech exists as the means whereby thought is communicated from man to man ("man" including both sexes), then there is room for the question that heads this paper.

To talk without having anything to impart, without seeking to acquire new information or ideas, is to perform a function as useless and wearisome as whirling the wooden instruments of torture which country children call corn-crakes. The latter are now happily somewhat rare; the other kind of noise-producers are abundant and active.

Con conversationally, the people of this country are not interesting as are the inhabitants of the sister isle, or our neighbours across the Channel, and that not from lack of natural capacity, but from lack of practice in the art of communicating opinions or mental impressions in an acceptable way. If great English ladies ever sought to surround themselves with wits whose talk was their passport, they do so no more; if a humbler stratum of society ever gave conversation parties where the guests could be depended on to amuse each other, they have permitted these to pass out of existence, and the seriousness of this mis-

fortune is only understood of those who know that intimate intercourse with a vigorous and alert thinker is the most inspiring influence on the face of the earth. We do not recognise the members of our own intellectual corps until we exchange the watchwords; we do not appreciate the value or valuelessness of our own thought till we have submitted it to another intelligence.

Yet the suppression of talk seems to be the object of present-day hospitality. Social habits seem to have been formed to abolish the necessity for it. If people meet to hear music or look at variety entertainments or cinematographs, to play ping-pong or games of cards, or to dance, what need is there that they shall think at all or seek for thought in others?

When we entertain the young it is necessary that we provide sources of amusement or diversion; they are at the age of absorption merely, therefore we put Punch and Judy shows before them, and let them speak into phonographs, and look at *tableaux vivants*; if we can induce them to take part in the last, so much the better, the pleasure is protracted. But to entertain adults by the same methods is not to compliment highly their intelligence. Granted that these enjoy something to look at or something to eat much more than they would enjoy something to think about, that fact proves that they are mentally jaded or mentally undeveloped, and only that.

When people are obliged by circumstances to give entertainments on a numerically large scale, it is necessary to supply some source of amusement likely to prove generally acceptable, and spectacular effects are the most popular. Every one can appreciate, or at least understand, a drawing-room drama, when the staging is done regardless of cost, and all people of all ages—or almost all—enjoy dressing up, so that anything that involves fancy attire is sure to be popular. Where people possess state apartments so fine that these in themselves are a spectacle, then a low-toned band or two and a buffet supper will do the rest. But there is no human intercourse in all this, no contact with a kindred mind, no tightening of the bonds of brotherhood. Indeed it is doubtful if the guests are conscious of all the trouble taken on their behalf, or are in any degree grateful for it. However, where hospitality has to be dispensed on a large scale, there is no other way than the big gathering where, as one or two cannot be ubiquitous, some general effect must supplement individual efforts

## Women's Interests

to amuse and interest the company. But in the case of a few friends prepared effects spoil everything, and when a reader of *The Leisure Hour* writes for a method of entertaining ten people for an evening, as has just happened, the question opens up such a vista of spurious pleasure and sacrificed good-will that nothing less than a whole page will discuss it adequately.

A hostess should know her ten guests well, indeed should invite them to meet each other with some assurance of sympathetic tastes and ideas. Strangers should be introduced to each other, especially if believed to be of like mind, and should be left to converse together as long as they seem to enjoy each other's company. Among the ten are sure to be two or three possessors of accomplishments which they would probably like to exercise; they should be afforded an opportunity of doing so, when individual interest seems to flag. It is only where converse has no charm that games prove a resort. In this case recourse may be had for the young to Warne's Plays for evening parties; for the

elderly there are various quiet games for two or four, should these seem preferable to the little chat which people who know each other and do not meet often are so sure to enjoy. Then there is the supper, which is a much more important feature in the entertaining of a small party than of a large one, and the good-will which is so much more obvious when guests are treated as individuals, and not as a community to be bundled together, diverted, and then despatched. If people are brought together because it is known they will mutually enjoy intercourse, a larger contribution will be made to the sum of their happiness than if every performer that ever played before a king exhausted his whole repertoire for their diversion. Intellectually they most enjoy the feast who help to bring the viands.

VERITY.

Letters relating to "Women's Interests," etc., to be addressed—"Verity," c/o Editor, "The Leisure Hour," 56 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

## The Fireside Club

### COMPARISONS

#### From a Nineteenth-Century Author

1. Who said "Some folks' tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin', not to tell you the time o' the day, but because there's summat wrong i' their own inside"?
2. Who said "If you want to slip into a round hole, you must make a ball of yourself"?
3. Who knitted "with fierce rapidity, as if that movement were a necessary function, like the twittering of a crab's antennæ"?
4. What pudding came in "with symbolical blue flames round it, as if it had been heroically snatched from the nether flames into which it had been thrown by dyspeptic Puritans"?
5. Who thought "notions and scruples were like spilt needles, making one afraid of treading, or sitting down, or even eating"?
6. Who was "welly like a cock as thinks the sun's rose o' purpose to hear him crow"?
7. Whose cheesecakes were so exquisitely light that "a puff of wind 'ud make them blow about like feathers"?
8. Who said "You make but a poor trap to catch luck if you go and bait it wi' wickedness"?
9. Who loved to sit under a tree "and listen to the hum of insects, like tiniest bells on the garment of silence"?
10. To whose mind would banks and strong boxes "have nullified the pleasure of property—she might as well have taken her food in capsules"?

11. Who thought that "a man's mind—what there is of it—has always the advantage of being masculine, as the smallest birch-tree is of a higher kind than the most soaring palm"?

12. Apropos of whose engagement was it asked, "Has any one ever pinched into its pilulous smallness, the cobweb of prematrimonial acquaintance-ship"?

Give chapter and book for each answer. A prize of the value of Half-a-Guinea offered for the first set of correct answers.

### ACROSTIC WANTED.

A prize of the value of Half-a-Guinea is offered for the best original four-line Double Acrostic in prose or verse made by any of our readers, of which the initials read downwards and the finals read upwards spell *snowdrop*, thus:—

S	—	P
N	—	O
O	—	R
W	—	D

All competition papers must be received by the 15th of December, and be marked outside "Fireside Club."

### CORRECTION.

The name "E. W. HENDRY" given as a prize-winner last month for "Identifications from Dickens" should have been E. W. HENDY.

## ON THE BOOK TABLE

(Books received :—A. C. BENSON'S *The Schoolmaster*, John Murray, 5s. W. S. RODGERS' *Villa Gardens*, Grant Richards, 2s. 6d. E. K. and ARTHUR LINTON'S *Poems*, Sonnenschein and Co. MRS. CRAIGIE'S *Love and the Soul Hunters*, T. Fisher Unwin, 6s. E. T. FOWLER'S *Fuel of Fire*, Hodder and Stoughton, 6s. ASCOT R. HOPE'S *All Astray*, A. and C. Black. RUDYARD KIPLING'S *Just So Stories*, Macmillan, 6s. J. A. STEUART'S *A Son of Gad*, Hutchinson and Co., 6s.)

Mr. Benson's book, *The Schoolmaster*, though professedly written for teachers, is of great interest to the parents of school-boys. He illuminates from within the ideals, the methods and the difficulties of teaching, in a manner sure to inform parents who wish to understand these points, and yet who gain little from ordinary letters or interviews with such schoolmasters as they know. In talk, they find their tentative observations of one boy easily discounted by the professional man's knowledge of many; and feel themselves regarded as superficial amateurs of his science. To such inquiring parents, and indeed to all interested in the practice of education, this sound and able book is of value, whether its author writes of discipline, teaching, work or holidays; not least in its wise chapters on morality and religion.

Mr. Rodgers' *Villa Gardens* is a handbook to rejoice the heart of the amateur, in making him independent of professional aid, often as supercilious as it is expensive. Mr. Rodgers enters with you into all the possibilities of your little strip of ground, measures and lays it out to scale, considers the aspect, beds, paths, and turf, and enunciates sound principles, such as—"Let the plan be your first consideration;" "every path should lead somewhere;" "plant fully, so as to insure not an inch of soil being visible when your plants are fully established." He tells you how to make paths, summer-houses, trellises, rock-gardens, labels, and cement—what, when, and where to plant. If his strictures against rustic woodwork, decrepit statuary, windmills, and flagstaffs seem a counsel of perfection, a human weakness for weather-cocks on summer-houses shows him less austere—and when, mentioning that a weather-cock is readily constructed of sheet-zinc, he adds, "it looks well gilded," there is surely no villa-gardener but will hold out to him the right hand of fellowship.

Love, Nature, and Human Nature are the themes of *Poems*, by E. K. and Arthur Linton. The love poems are musically written, although too vague in ascription and renunciation alike to excite active sympathy. When a poet sings to his love,

"In thee the whole world's beauty we behold,"

he does not carry conviction, and we suspect him to have known love, as Sydney Smith's Scotch-woman talked of it, "in the abstract" only. The nature studies, such as *A Rain Song* and *The Moon*, are quite charming, true to nature, yet adorned by flights of fancy, in which the ideas are as original as the fastidiously choice wording is piquant.

Treating of Human Nature, one of our pair of poets neatly reflects the changefulness of the

artistic temperament in the looking-glass of a quatrain—

"To-day I marvel what I would be at:  
My soul, intent and happy yesterday,  
Last night arose, revolving like a cat,  
And softly settling looks the other way."

In *Love and the Soul Hunters*, Mrs. Craigie turns the search-light of her brilliant analyses once more on the whirlpool of London Society, and reveals anew the dreary circling of withering and dead souls borne on its pleasure-seeking or money-getting eddies. Here and there among the crowd are some still untainted by the soul-stifling atmosphere, still capable of grace, and goodness, and of unselfish love, whose triumph over the soul hunters lends absorbing interest to the story. Mrs. Craigie's wit, her observant philosophy, and the distinction of her style have long ago placed her in the very front rank of living writers of fiction. This book abounds with noteworthy passages, as these from Felshammer's letters—"Passions and enthusiasms leave one; they depend on our happiness, our health, a host of accidental, non-essential things, whereas you can remember your duty at every turn." "Hypocrisy is slowly dying out, and the candour of modern souls would be sublime if the souls themselves were not, for the greater part, squalid." Or this caustic description of two millionaires dining—"Both gentlemen were dyspeptics, and one was endeavouring to find nourishment in a dish of boiled rice, while the other was taking hot water with some finely-chopped raw meat. This plain food was served on gold plate." Towards the close of this sombre study of a joyless vanity fair, one of Mrs. Craigie's characters strikes a note of hope—"A reaction against snobbery is coming," she declares. "The world is getting much more healthy; it still thinks far too much about money, but all the strong folks are coming right along in splendid style. Clementine is among the strong ones," and Clementine duly escapes the soul hunters.

Baxendale Hall was fated in a rhyming prophecy to be burnt down thrice, and the skilfully entangled plot of Miss Fowler's story, *Fuel of Fire*, keeps the reader until the very end in interesting uncertainty as to who finally set fire to it. Lawrence Baxendale, its poor but proud owner, falls in love at the outset of the story with a most unattractive young thing of the name of Nancy Burton. Before love blinds him, "her wit," we are told, "he regarded as pertness," and pertness sprinkled with cheap epigrams it remains to the end. Surely a nice young man who is deliberately doomed by his author to marry an underbred chatterbox demands the sympathy of every gentle reader. The well-sustained suspense of the plot makes it suitable for reading aloud.

If ever a school story was delightfully calculated to take the chill off the plunge for any youngster shivering on the brink of his first term, Ascot Hope's new volume *All Astray* is the book. Who could dread a world peopled by such jovial friends, filled with such happy adventures, governed by such humane powers? In portraying the resourceful Undy, both the author and his clever artist have found a type quite as new as he is amusing.

*Just So Stories* are written and pictured for

## The Fireside Club

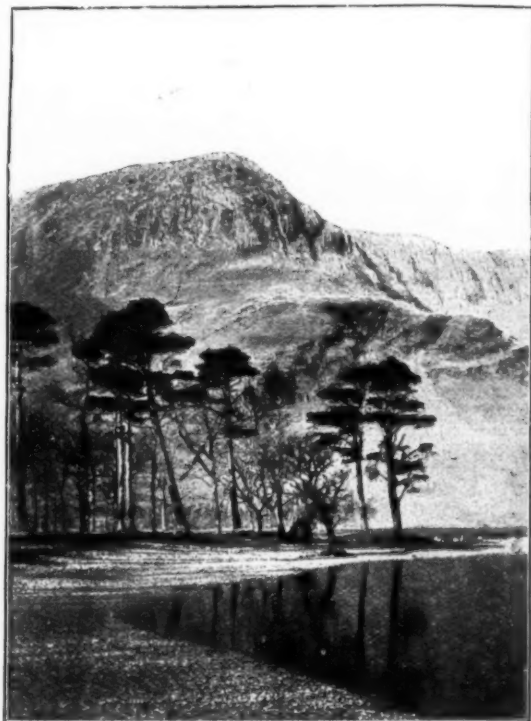
people about eight years of age. With more art and all the simplicity of that classic *Struwwelpeter*, these tales begin at the very beginning, and explain satisfactorily the origin of the leopard's spots, the elephant's trunk, the camel's hump, and other things that one naturally wants to know all about. In addition to Mr. Kipling's usual skill in literature, these tales have a charm which will appeal to all grown-up people who know anything of the difficulty of such story-telling, in the recurrent catch-words, like sign-posts, making the track easy to follow, and in the happy provision made for the questions and comments sure to occur to eager little listeners.

The Cat that walked by Himself is perhaps the best story, as finely conceived as anything in the Jungle Books. Mr. Kipling's pictures are unequal

in merit, some over-ambitious and confused, others first-rate, while the confidential explanations attached to them all are very good reading.

*A Son of Gad* is a puzzling book. So vivacious that it goes from start to finish without flagging for a single page, and yet so improbable in incident and so clumsy in mechanism that it is difficult to analyse its interest. The characters are stock characters (some very recently added to stock, as the American financier, and some time-honoured, as the faithful retainer). But they talk very well. Therein lies Mr. Steuart's magic, a charm that surmounts all the defects of his style, and makes us hope for more from his pen.

(Other notices are unavoidably held over.)



BUTTERMERE AND HIGH CRAG

Prize Photograph by E. J. Goscer



# Our Chess Page

## Problem Tourney. Five Guineas in Prizes

OUR usual winter Problem Tourney was instituted last month, and the conditions will be found on p. 87. We shall especially welcome problems from new composers.

The sui-mate problem by Mr. F. W. Andrew aroused a large amount of interest. The first prize was won by a solver who telegraphed his solution. Unfortunately his telegram has been mislaid, and we shall be glad if the sender will send us his name and address. The destination of the second prize has not yet been determined. The key-move is Kt-Kt 4.

**Solving Competition.**—By the time this page sees the light the prize-winners in this competition will know their fate. Owing to the illness and absence of the adjudicator we are unable to publish the result until next month. But Chess Players can be very patient!

It is some months since we published a game for the study of our readers. The following, kindly placed at our disposal by Mr. Woon, will be found to be well worth examination:—

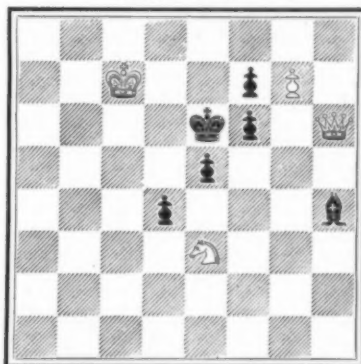
Game played in the correspondence match, North of England v. South of England.

WHITE.	BLACK.
J. ROGERS (North).	C. J. WOON (South).
1. P-K 4	P-K 4
2. K Kt-B 3	Q Kt-Q B 3
3. B-Kt 5	K Kt-B 3
4. P-Q 3	P-Q 3
5. P-Q B 3	P-K Kt 3
6. P-Q 4	B-Q 2
7. Q Kt-Q 2	B-Kt 2
8. P x P	Q Kt x P
9. Kt x Kt	P x Kt
10. Q-K 2	Castles
11. P-K B 3	Q-K 2
12. Kt-B sq	Q R-Q
13. B-Q 3	Kt-R 4
14. Q-Q B 2	B-K 3
15. P-Q R 3	Q-Q 3
16. B-K 2	Kt-K B 5
17. B x Kt	P x B
18. Kt-Q 2	Q-Kt 3
19. Castles Q R	Q-K B 7
20. B-B 1	P-Q R 3
21. P-K 5	P-Q Kt 4
22. Q-K 4	B-R 3
23. Q-K 2	Q-K 6
24. R-K	R-Q 2
25. Q-Q	K R-Q
26. R x Q	P x R
27. B-K 2	R x Kt
28. Q-K	B-B 4
29. Resigns	

Here are two unpublished problems from one whose compositions are always eagerly welcomed:—

No. 1.—By C. W. of Sunbury.

BLACK—6 MEN

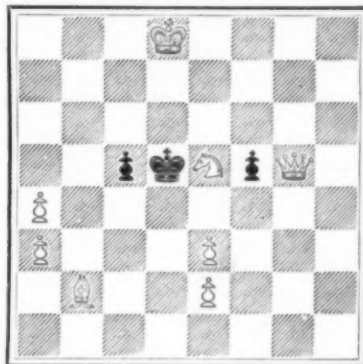


WHITE—4 MEN

White to mate in three moves.

No. 2.—By C. W. of Sunbury.

BLACK—3 MEN



WHITE—8 MEN

White to mate in two moves.

All communications to be addressed to the Editor, "The Leisure Hour," 56 Paternoster Row, London, E.C., and to be marked CHESS on the envelope. Competition entries must be accompanied by the Eisteddfod Ticket from the Contents page.

# The Leisure Hour Eisteddfod

## RESULT OF COMPETITION 19

### ESSAYS IN CRITICISM.

First Prize (**CANADIAN PICTURES**, 25s.)—  
ALICE M. FARWIG, 66 St. John's Road, Upper  
Holloway, N.

Second Prize (**HANDWRITING OF KINGS AND  
QUEENS**, 10s. 6d.)—  
MISS M. M. WEMYSS, Pilot Mound, Manitoba.

Eight other Prizes:—

(**THE PILGRIM FATHERS OF NEW ENGLAND**,  
5s.)—MR. C. M. ANDERSON, 26 Church Road,  
Forest Hill, S.E.

(**DRIFTWOOD**, 5s.)—HENRIETTA BRIGGS, Anton  
Lodge, Andover, Hants.

(**STELLA'S PATHWAY**, 3s. 6d.)—MISS FLORENCE  
M. BENTON, School Lane, Swavesey, Cam-  
bridge.

(**SHADES AND ECHOES OF OLD LONDON**,  
2s. 6d.)—JOHN McCHARLES, 168 Kent St.,  
Ottawa.

(**MASTERS OF TO-MORROW**, 2s. 6d.)—J. W.  
HARRIS, Eriswell, Brandon, Suffolk.

(**WAYS AND MEANS**, 2s. 6d.)—MRS. C. DAVIS,  
Lloyd's Bank House, Dursley, Glos.

(**RIVERS OF WATER IN A DRY PLACE**, 2s. 6d.)—  
JANE RICHARDSON, Croft Cottage, Distin-  
gton, Cumberland.

(**FAIRY TALES FROM FAR JAPAN**, 2s. 6d.)—  
OLIVE CROSSE, 6 De Vesci Place, Monks-  
town, Cork.

### Summary of Criticisms

We invited competitors to state their favourite story or stories, their favourite article or articles, and their favourite illustration or illustrations in *The Leisure Hour*, commencing with November 1901 and ending October 1902. We also invited a statement of any defects, which we have duly noted.

### 1. FAVOURITE STORIES.

The favourite stories, according to our com-  
petitors, have been:—

*John Austin's Will* (twelve months' serial).  
*Our Boy* (p. 451).  
*To Beg he was Ashamed* (p. 45).  
*A Picture in the North Countrie* (p. 715).  
*A Born Comforter* (p. 539).  
*The Golden Image* (p. 803).  
*A Tragedy of Silence* (p. 236).  
*On the Wrong Scent* (p. 333).  
*The Light in the Window* (p. 642).  
*The Persecution of John P. Tadcaster* (p. 363).

### 2. FAVOURITE ARTICLES.

*Fifty Years of "The Leisure Hour"* (p. 177).  
*Californian Wild Flowers* (p. 746).  
*Science and Discovery Notes* (throughout  
the Vol.).  
*Going Steerage* (p. 548).  
*A Trip to the Aran Isles* (p. 730).  
*The Coronation* (by the Bishop of Ripon)  
(p. 631).  
*A Prince of Publishers* (p. 150).  
*The Coastwise Lights of England* (pp. 21, etc.).  
*Reminiscences of Westminster* (p. 656).  
*Fifty Thousand Miles under the Union Jack*  
(p. 275).  
*Our Veteran Painter, Sidney Cooper* (p. 91).  
*Life on the London Press* (pp. 464, etc.).  
*The Children's Crusade* (p. 901).

### 3. FAVOURITE ILLUSTRATIONS.

*Lights at Sea* (p. 450).  
*A Picture in the North Countrie* (p. 717).  
*Canterbury Cathedral* (p. 93).  
*A Fruitful Land* (p. 65).  
*A Rainy Day* (p. 978).  
*A Charming Sermon* (p. 800).  
*Bolton Abbey* (p. 445).  
*Faults on Both Sides* (p. 391).  
*Ghyll Beck Falls* (p. 1046).  
*The White Cockade* (p. 868).



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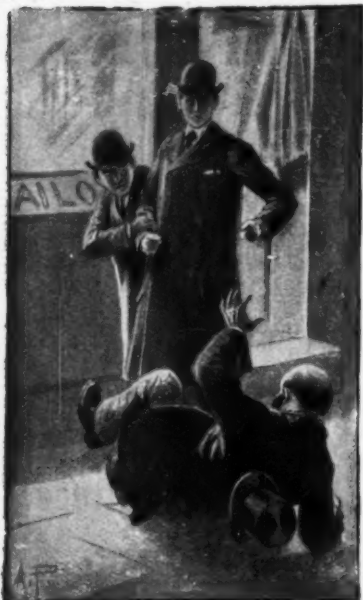
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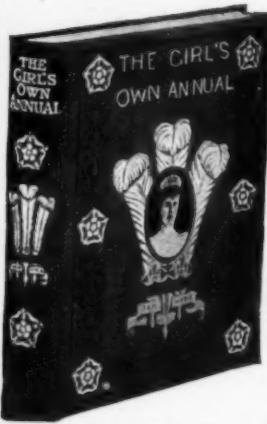
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